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Referring

A PRIEST'S POEMS

A PRIEST'S POEMS

BY

KENELM DIGBY BEST

PRIEST OF THE ORATORY OF ST. PHILIP NERI

IN TWO PARTS

"O judge not thou that I have been too bold
With sacred teaching, or have done it wrong
To give fair form or sweetness to my song."

FABER

LONDON

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PREFACE

THE verses gathered into this Volume were written in former years at various intervals. Through the benevolence of the kindest of Editors, some of them have appeared from time to time in the *Irish Monthly*. Some again, first printed so long ago as 1873, made a little Book of Poems, translated and original, in honour of Our Lady. This has long been out of print, but is to be found now in Part II.

Having received a suggestion and authorization from the esteemed brother in St. Philip to whose care and keeping our Cardinal Newman left his correspondence, the Translator now feels at liberty to quote the generous words with which the Cardinal accepted a copy of the *May Chaplet and other Poems*.

“THE ORATORY, *April 22, 1873.*

“ . . . I thank you very much for the volume of poems which you have been so kind as to send me. I mean it for a high compliment, and I hope you will take as such, if I say they read so easily and naturally that I should never take them for translations. Those which are original at the end of the volume, fluent as they are, do not run more fluently than those which you have taken from Father Philpin. . . .”

This praise from one so truly great is gratefully recorded here, not without a hope of securing for Verses thus honoured more attention than they have hitherto received from others.

The difficult task of translating French poetry into equivalent English verse was undertaken as a labour of fraternal love. "Vincit omnia amor." But the present work appears at this late hour chiefly because it has the honour and good fortune to be accorded a place among the publications of the Catholic Truth Society.

However, like every one else who writes verses, the Author feels that he ought to offer some excuse for these. Unless the following words of St. Bernard suggest some plea to the charity of those who have a right to explanation, he is without defence. "Scribere me aliquid et devotio jubet, et prohibet occupatio . . . id tantillum otii, quod vel mihi de somno fraudans in noctibus intercipere sinor, non sinam otiosam . . . ad quod opus faciendum etsi nulla Fratrum vel necessitas urgeat, vel utilitas moveat: dum tamen ex hoc non impediatur, quo ad quæque ipsorum necessaria minus paratus inveniar, non arbitror eos gravari, si propriæ satisfacio devotioni" (*De Laudibus Virginis Matris*).

KENELM DIGBY BEST.

LONDON, 1900.

Feast of the Annunciation.

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PART I

LYRA MARTYRUM

LAYS OF EARLY MARTYRS



A PRIEST'S POEMS

SAINT STEPHEN

JERUSALEM, Jerusalem,
How many thou hast slain !
A very flood of guiltless blood
Thy Sanctuary doth stain.
O City proud ! o'er whom the cloud
Hangs low with curse and gloom,
Like awful frown of God come down
To consummate thy doom.
All-undeterred by Christ's own word
And by the tears He shed,
Thou still dost rave, and madly brave
The thunders overhead.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
That veil asunder rent,
Those shattered blocks, those riven rocks
Cry out, Repent, repent !
But cry in vain : thy cold disdain
To warning gives no heed,
And keeps the path of cruel wrath,
No matter who may bleed.

Scourge, murder those the Saviour chose,
 Regard nor right nor ruth ;
They dread not strife, they ask not life,
 But death for Christ and truth !

Before the Council Stephen stands,
 The Levite of his Lord,
The signs and wonders he has worked
 Less mighty than his word.
See ! grace and fortitude are there,
 And fulness of the Faith,
The fulness of the Holy Ghost
 To prompt the word he saith.
The other deacons of the Lord
 Were chosen after him,
The foremost he, like Michael midst
 The Seven Seraphim.

A rabble crowd has dragged him here,
 With witnesses suborned
To swear he spoke against the Law,
 And Sion's Temple scorned.
High Priest and Council, Ancients, Scribes,
 Who killed the Lord of all—
These very men are met again
 Within the judgment hall.
Saint Stephen's youth, his zeal for truth,
 Avail not in this place.
He speaks : with light his face is bright,
 'Tis like an Angel's face.

“Ye men and brethren, fathers, hear !
 Ye know how God hath dealt
With all His friends—with Abraham,
 Ere he in Charan dwelt.

While Abraham's eye beheld the sky
Of stars above his head,
He heard God speak of countless seed
To one reputed dead.
God's friend believed, and thus received,
Outside his desert tent,
The Promise, in the dead of night,
The glorious Covenant.

"Ye know how Patriarch-brethren sold
The Favourite of God :
And yet, he saved them—Israel
Adored his Joseph's rod.
Like envy was to Moses shown ;
He strove to save our race :
Mistrusting him they would not hear,
But drove him from the place.
At Sina, in the burning Bush
The Lord our God he saw :
And Moses, spurned by us, returned,
The Giver of the Law.

"Whom they reject the Lord appoints
Their Saviour, and their Guide
From Egypt to the Promised Land,
Through sea, through desert wide.
How often he would say to them :
' A Prophet will arise,
From Satan's thrall to ransom all,
And lead to Paradise.'
They disbelieved, they vexed and grieved
The Servant of the Lord :
The Calf and Moloch, Rempha's star,
Were set up and adored.

"Yes, Moses failed, God's dearest Friend,
 To keep them from offence :
 They disobeyed, they sinned, and strayed
 Upon the least pretence.
 Uncircumcised in heart and ears,
 And stiff-necked now as then,
 The Holy Ghost ye still resist,
 And slay God's chosen men !
 Your fathers slew the Prophets who
 Foretold the Just One's reign—
 Alas ! betrayers, murderers,
 'Tis He whom ye have slain."

To fury lashed, their teeth they gnash'd
 At what Saint Stephen said.
 He steadfastly to witness calls
 The heavens overhead.
 He cries, "Behold, the gates of gold
 Are opened wide ; I see
 At God's right hand Christ Jesus stand !"—
 They seize him cruelly ;
 They stop their ears ; with yells and jeers
 They thrust him from the hall ;
 They only wait to reach the gate,
 And lay their clothes with Saul.

Then, thick and fast the stones are cast—
 With calmest self-control,
 He falls upon his knees, and prays :
 "Lord Jesus ! take my soul."
 The dull dread noise drowns not his voice,
 His last forgiving word,
 His prayer sublime, "Lay not this crime
 Unto their charge, O Lord !"

Hurl on, hurl on ! Cast stone on stone,
Ye murderers ! pile the heap.
The Saint beneath is safe in death,
In Jesus falls asleep.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem !
O City desolate !
In mournful tone the Holy One
Foretold thy dreadful fate.
Thou wouldst not hear those accents clear :
“ Around her startled brood
No mother flings her sheltering wings
More promptly than I would ! ”
Jerusalem, Jerusalem !
Despoiled, destroyed, accursed—
At Stephen's prayer, may Jesus spare
And gather thy Dispersed !

SAINT LAURENCE

My native Land, my native Land !
It is a joy to tell
How Roman Saints have loved thy sons,
Have loved and served them well.

The Great Saint Gregory declared
The fair-haired English race
Would all be *angels*, were they taught
The truths of saving grace.

And at that word, Augustine sailed —
He trod the Kentish shore,
Beneath the banner of our Lord
His Benedictines bore.

A friendly welcome he received
Upon a foreign strand,
To friendly ears he told the name
Of each monk in his band.

He spoke of those whose names they bore,
He made Saint Laurence known ;
Few were the Saints we had before,
The Saints that were our own.

My native Land, my native Land !
It is a joy to tell
How thou hast loved the Roman Saints,
Those Saints who loved thee well !

Bright shines the banner of the Faith :
Again in England dwell
Augustine's monks : once more are built
The altar and the cell.

And in thy breast, sweet Mowbray Vale,
Safe sleeps the hallowed spot
That proves Saint Laurence by those monks
Hath never been forgot.

With altar decked for festival,
And hall for blameless mirth,
The monks have kept Saint Laurence's
Glad day of heavenly birth.

The De Profundis bell has tolled—
The last prayer has been said ;
The brethren, ere they sought their rest,
Implored rest for the dead.

Deep silence settles everywhere,
And Mowbray Vale to-night
Seems full of more than usual peace,
More full of silver light.

The little church and monastery,
Beneath the pine-tree wood,
Look white as snow-drift weirdly heaped
In Alpine solitude.

But they who watch this night may see,
When looking up on high,
Sights fairer than the sights of earth,
The wonders of the sky.

The stork and swallow know their time,
The season of their flight—
What errand have these flocks of stars
That speed through space to-night ?

The very heavens they sweep across
Seem narrow and confined ;
Until ye mark the fixed stars shine,
Above, beyond, behind.

At times, a golden hurricane
Whirls westward through the sky,
And now, they fall down one by one,
As petals when flowers die.

Anon, they seem the javelins
Of warrior-angel band,
Unceasingly discharged against
Some planet's distant land.

They bring to mind the Holy Writ,
And Sisera's fierce wars,
When Israel in his hour of need
Was fought for by the stars.

They bring to mind the mighty Will
That orders each one's path,
That ever says : " Hurt not the earth,
Until the Day of Wrath ! "

My native Land ! they brought to mind,
In former happy years,
Saint Laurence and his martyrdom :
These stars were called his Tears.

Then, let a minstrel sing to-night
The Martyr's thrilling tale—
Ah me ! he learned it when a child
In Mowbray's peaceful vale.

The praise of heathen Rome is sung
In many a sounding verse ;
And valiant were the men who had
The fabled wolf for nurse.

But Rome has nobler, braver sons,
Has heroes more sublime,
Whose brows Eternity adorns,
Whose fame outlives all time.

Rome's Coliseum oft has proved
The Soldiers of the Lord ;
The Vatican, the Appian Way
Beheld them brave the sword.

Our Christian Martyrs far excel
The warriors of Mars.
Now, listen how Saint Laurence fought
The while ye watch the stars. . . .

From childhood he was reared in Rome—
Though born in distant Spain—
Was made Archdeacon of the Church
In fierce Valerian's reign.

And when this persecutor seized
The Shepherd of the Flock,
The holy Sixtus, who was sent
To suffer on the block—

His Levite Laurence followed him,
In loving discontent
That he was left behind, and thus
He uttered his lament :

“O Father ! whither goest thou ?
Why leave thy son behind ?
In what have I displeased thee,
To make thee thus unkind ?

“When thou hast offered Sacrifice,
With thee I ever stood—
Hast thou not made me Minister
Of Christ's Most Precious Blood ?

“Oh ! now that thou dost shed thine own,
Thy faithful Levite take !
Alas ! am I unfit to die
For our dear Saviour's sake ?”

To comfort Laurence, Sixtus said :
“I leave thee not, my son,
Nor cast thee off ; thy turn will come
Before three days are done.

“Secure the treasures of the Church,
And then thou shalt be free ;
Thy conflict will be sharp and long,
But thou wilt follow me.

“For me, a feeble, weak old man,
God wills an easy death ;
Thy youth and courage are to win
More glory to the Faith.”

They parted. With the Church's alms
Saint Laurence sought the poor ;
He knelt, he washed and kissed their feet ;
He made the wealth secure.

Valerian, who was told their speech,
With lust of gold inflamed,
Gave orders Laurence should be seized,
Since treasure had been named.

Before Valerian Laurence stood ;
The Cæsar bade him fetch
Those treasures—for an emperor
Can be a sordid wretch.

Saint Laurence smiled : " Accord delay,"
He said, " and thou shalt see
That I will gather up and bring
The Church's Treasury."

In three days he had gathered all,
The poor, the blind, the lame,
And, with this squalid company,
To Cæsar's presence came.

" Behold the Treasures of the Church,
My lord ! " Saint Laurence cried,
" For Christ's Poor constitute her wealth,
The dowry of His Bride ! "

Then called the angered Emperor
For scorpion and scourge—
The wearied lictors struck in vain,
In vain did Cæsar urge.

They rack his body, burn the sides
With red-hot iron plates—
His face is glad and calm, although
The poor flesh palpitates.

He cries : "Learn, tyrant, that I feel
No torment in this hour !
For this, I praise Thee, Christ, my Lord,
Thus making known Thy power !"

Men marvel at the painless joy
With which his features glow ;
But some perceive that Angels wipe
The sweat from off his brow.

Upon the mangled flesh once more
Their scourges lictors ply ;
Saint Laurence prays aloud to God,
He deems death must be nigh.

But from the heavens a voice is heard :
It warns him that the fight
Will be prolonged, that he must still
Do battle for the right. . . .

The long, long day at last was done,
They led the Saint away ;
Valerian slept his guilty sleep,
The Martyr watched to pray.

And he, who saw the Angel help
Saint Laurence 'mid his pain,
Besought him for baptismal grace,
Nor prayed for it in vain.

How fair the morn, how bright the sun
That rose on Rome next day !
Once more, within Jove's temple, met
The tyrant and his prey.

Remonstrances and bribes came first,
Then torture as before ;
At last they made a bed of fire
Upon the temple floor.

The ancient Romans are extolled
For patience under pain—
Not one comes near this Christian man,
This foreigner from Spain !

For right above the burning logs
A gridiron they arranged ;
And on that couch Saint Laurence lay,
His countenance unchanged.

With fiendish skill they checked or piled
The fuel underneath,
Delaying, lengthening with art
His slow and lingering death.

And he, the while, all calmly said :
" Know, tyrant, that this fire
A bed of roses seems to me,
For thee it keeps its ire"—

And then, those words of playfulness,
And slighting of the heat—
" One side of me is done enough—
O tyrant, turn and eat ! "

No look of anguish, nor of fear,
No anger in that face !
Oh, Patience was his mother's name,
And patience was his grace.

At length the Levite prayed to God,
In sweet and loving tone :
" Lord ! let my sacrifice ascend
Like incense to Thy throne."

The burning heat and flame had reached
The last retreat of life ;
The soul of Laurence rose to God,
Victorious in the strife.

And they who told his Martyrdom,
In England's by-gone years,
Would show the Falling Stars, and call
Those golden stars his Tears.

Saint Laurence ! patient, brave and chaste,
Thou Patron of my youth !
Protect my soul from every fire
But that of grace and truth.

SAINT LUCY

SICILY ! mountains and bays of blue water—
Earth's fairest features, I own, thou canst claim :
But, lovely island, Saint Lucy, thy daughter,
Hallows that beauty with her lustrous name.

Hail to the Saint ! whose pathological story
Teaches what torment her sex can endure,
Strengthened by God to win heavenly glory,
Teaches what succour God gives to the pure.

Happy Catania ! whose Martyr victorious
Slept there in peace with the palm-branch and crown ;
Syracuse pined on her sea-shore, inglorious,
Sending her pilgrims to Agatha's town.

Lucy of Syracuse and her sick mother
Sailed to Catania for Agatha's aid ;
Oft on the voyage they retold one another
Miracles wrought through the Martyr and Maid.

Hopeful and ardent, Saint Lucy prayed, kneeling ;
Trance stole upon her, and Agatha came ;
Just like a sister, with tenderest feeling,
Sweetly she greeted Saint Lucy by name.

"O Virgin Lucy, my sister, why ask me
That which thine own prayer would equally gain
Curing thy mother would not overtask thee ;
Thine own request her relief would obtain.

"Sister, thy vows give our Saviour such pleasure,
That His divine love hath made this decree—
Thou art to be Syracuse's blest treasure,
As my Catania rejoices in me."

.

Merrily flew the skiff over the water,
Playing on white wing with wave and with wind ;
Health cheered the mother, and glad was the daughter,
Visions of martyrdom filling her mind.

Foes to the Cross were not slow to betray her,
Hating a maiden so pure and so good ;
Blithesome before, she grew brighter and gayer,
When she was called to resist unto blood.

"Keen is thy wit, but my scourge will prove keener !'
Said the rude Prefect, with insolent boast.
"Nay," she retorted, "nor words, nor demeanour
Fail those replenished with God's Holy Ghost."

"Virgin, beware ! I can make Him desert thee ;
One word from me, and thy pride is undone !'
"Nay," she replied, "cruel force cannot hurt me—
That would but double my chastity's crown."

Safe from his threats as the heavens above her,
Firm as the Bride-church Christ built on the Rock,
Temple of purity, none could remove her ;
Wolf never mangled this lamb of the Flock.

Flames might not harm her : Saint Lucy stood fearless,
Still as a statue's the neck which they smote :
Scarcely another save Lucy was tearless
When the sharp dagger was plunged in her throat.

Torturers left her, the faithful drew near her,
Foremost came he who had charge of Christ's sheep,
Bringing the Manna of Heaven to cheer her,
And raise her to life from death's virginal sleep.

Crowds gazed upon her, with envy and pity,
Heard the last words, saw the last blissful look :
Then her pure soul for the Heavenly City
Mother and kindred and country forsook.

Ye who are tempted and heavily laden,
Think of Saint Lucy's heroical fight !
Call on this blessed Sicilian maiden—
Darkness and sin flee away from her light.

SAINT AGNES

O VIRGIN-MARTYR Saint ! how much we love
The name of Agnes since it has been thine !
Thy parents must have learned it from above
By inspiration or some sacred sign.

In choosing it, they meant not to declare
An only child, one sent to their old age,
Should be their Pet Lamb, reared with fondest care,
To be their solace in life's final stage.

No ! They who gave to God their ample wealth,
Who served Christ's poor and sick in haughty Rome,
Who from their noble house went forth by stealth
To join the Brethren in the Catacomb—

Would not have chosen Agnes for thy name
Unless they destined thee for virgin vows,
Prepared to give thee to the Spotless Lamb,
His Bride-elect, His consecrated Spouse.

O Blessed Agnes ! Happy martyred Maid !
In childhood's innocence to Jesus given—
Kind Saint ! dear Sister ! all implore thy aid
Who lead on earth the angel life of heaven.

O ye who call Saint Agnes Patron Saint,
Heed well the fiery strife through which she passed ;
In combat, think of her and do not faint ;
The crown of life will grace your brows at last.

Ah ! those were the days when Rome picked out by lot
The vestal virgins, who bewailed their fate
Like Jepthe's daughter, victims who might not
Reject the dreaded honour of the state.

The Emperor, as Cæsar and High Priest,
Consigned these hapless vestals to their doom,
To join in rites abhorred, until released
By age, or death, or—worse—the living tomb.

Thus mournful error mocked and mimicked truth ;
The Demon would have virgins 'mid his slaves ;
He took his victims in the flower of youth,
And Vesta's temples were their gilded graves.

And those were days, when other virgins fed
A hallowed flame that lit a hallowed shrine,
That shone forth like a glory round their head,
And made their pure hearts glow with love divine.

These gave a heavenly meaning to the name ;
Their oath a solemn vow, no girlish whim—
They loved the Virgin-Mother of the Lamb,
They chose the Better Part, and followed Him.

They found a blest redemption from the Fall,
From Eva's punishment and dire disgrace—
Brought honour to their sex : their heavenly call
Has more than won back woman's rightful place.

To pain and torture they indeed aspired—
Their Love was crucified, and they would share
The sufferings He bore ; their hearts desired
This, this alone—it was their ceaseless prayer.

His "lilies among thorns," they were not housed
From tempest, nor embedded in soft moss—
Chaste virgins unto Christ the Lord espoused,
They followed where He went, nor feared His Cross.

In Sacrifice to God each day renewed
They saw the Lamb lie mystically slain—
And, fortified by that celestial Food,
They deemed life loss and martyrdom a gain.

Of such as these was Agnes, unto whom
Saint Marcellinus gave the virgin wreath
Before the faithful in the Catacomb,
And Diocletian gave the Martyr's death.

Her parents were among the great of Rome,
And, childless many years, escaped the search
That spared no Christian family and home,
When Cæsars waged their war against the Church.

But when this gentle and most lovely child
Had reached her thirteenth year, the house was sought :
Old friends remembered them, came back, and smiled,
And suitors for the hand of Agnes brought.

With many others came the Prefect's son,
Resolved on winning Agnes for a bride :
His calls the anxious parents might not shun,
He was too powerful to be denied.

He, bolder than the rest, presumed to seek
The Maid herself with gifts, and urge his cause.
Amazed, she heard the hopes he dared to speak,
And fearlessly exclaimed without a pause :

“ Hence, deadly poison ! Silence, language loathed !
Or, listen, while thy boldness I reprove,
And tell of Him to whom I am betrothed,
For whom I keep my faith and constant love.

“ The ages saw not His Eternal Birth ;
His father gives Him Majesty Divine—
A Virgin-Mother brought Him forth on earth ;
He placed upon my brow this Virgin Sign.

“ The day-star, nay, the sun shines not so bright
As my Beloved, on whom they cannot gaze ;
His Seraphs use their wings to veil their sight
Beneath the blinding splendour of His rays.

“ Thy trinkets tempt not. He has given me
Rich bracelets, necklaces of rarest stones—
For ear-rings, priceless pearls ; no gems can be
Immense as those upon my jewelled zones.

“ Thus, rubied with His Blood—my robe, my crown,
My cheeks and lips, with that sweet Blood I taste—
I love the Lamb of God, and Him alone,
Whom loving I am pure, espousing chaste.”

The youth withdrew abashed ; but thought she raved
Of one preferred to him. He grieved and pined
Dejectedly at home ; at last he craved
His father's help to change the Maiden's mind.

Symphronius the Prefect sought the Saint ;
He found her faithful to her Unknown Love,
And, hearing she was Christian, guessed her feint,
Knew that the Spouse she meant was God above.

The Prefect cried : " If thou refuse to wed,
Be Vesta's Virgin : else, far worse than death
Shall be thy doom. From off that haughty head
The vilest hands shall pluck its virgin wreath."

They dragged Saint Agnes to no lion's den—
Christ's innocent, pure lamb was doomed to worse !
More welcome wild beasts than the monstrous men
Whose vileness shall not desecrate my verse.

Are not "the lilies of the field" arrayed
In glory by our Heavenly Father's care ?
He clothed Christ's lily—for He veiled the Maid
With snow-white raiment and her flowing hair.

In dazzling light, Saint Agnes stood and prayed ;
The pitiless with reverence were filled :
The Prefect's son alone was not afraid,
And him—her Guardian Angel promptly killed.

Then knelt that wretched father at her feet,
Besought her to recall his son from death.
She prayed—and, lo ! her conquest was complete,
Procopius rose, converted to the Faith.

Then clamoured for her death the angry crowd :
The judge, like Pilate, wavered, turned and fled ;
By menaces he was ignobly cowed,
And weakly left another in his stead.

So, once more Agnes faced the judgment-seat ;
“ Those wrists want manacles,” the new judge cried.
The licitor’s smallest fell down at her feet—
Said he, “ Mine are not bracelets for a bride !”

“ Heap faggots round her, hither bring the torch,”
The judge called out : Saint Agnes felt no fear.
The fire sprang forth on those beneath the porch,
She stood untouched, and not a flame came near.

With hands upraised, amid the flames she prayed :
“ I bless Thee, God, the Father of my Lord,
That I have passed all peril by Thy aid ;
I glorify Thy Holy Name adored.

“ My heart’s desire at last breaks on my sight,
At last my life-long hope draws nigh to me !
How oft my soul hath sought Him in the night !
And now, my God, my Love, I come to Thee !

“ Nay, gentle headsman ! why look grieved, why shake ?
Send, send me to the God who took my Vows—
Strike, boldly strike ! My full forgiveness take—
Set free a soul long pining for her Spouse !”

The sign was given. He dashed away a tear ;
And then his sword struck off the fair child’s head—
Saint Agnes gained the death she held so dear—
A snow-white Lily lay there, crimson-red !

“ Forget thy people and thy father’s house ”
Are words of life, not words of hopeless doom ;
Mourn not the daughters chosen by *that* Spouse
For convent cell, or for a virgin tomb.

Let none think Agnes had no tender love
For earthly ties, because of her great call.
Ah, think not this, but let the sequel prove
They most love all who love God more than all.

Her parents in her triumph had not grieved ;
But, watching at her tomb, they sometimes mourned :
They missed their martyred Lamb, they felt bereaved—
To give them peace, one night the Saint returned.

Surrounded by bright Virgins, Agnes came—
Most lovely, most resplendent was the show—
Upon her right there stood a spotless lamb,
Whose fleece was whiter than the whitest snow.

“ Hail, dearest Parents, hail ! ” the daughter said—
“ Behold my Sisters ! See my joy, my love !
And weep no more for me, nor mourn as dead
Your child whose hopes are all fulfilled above ! ”

Saint Agnes ! Child of Peter, Joy of Rome !
His Apostolic spirit lives in thee :
Where Peter feeds the Sheep, we see thee come,
The Lamb that bears the Shepherd company !

For, when a pastor sent in Peter's name
Has brought another flock within Christ's fold,
What holy symbol wears he, to proclaim
That Peter's Crook is rightly in his hold ?

Oh, is it not the Pallium of fine wool
From those white lambs upon thine altar laid,
And gently blessed with rite most beautiful—
Rome's graceful homage to her Martyred Maid ?

O Child of Rome ! bless those in banishment—
May faithful shepherds guide each distant flock,
And bear the lambs on shoulders meekly bent,
And fold all in the Shadow of the Rock !

Bless England, were it only for the sake
Of one sweet word, and all it goes to prove—
Saint Agnes' Flower we call our pure Snow-flake ;
That name, dear Saint ! records our former love.

SAINT CECILIA

ALONG the streets of heathen Rome,
In triumph and parade,
Valerian is conducting home
His bride, a Christian maid.

With music and with festive show
They bear the bride along :
But she, in accents soft and low,
Repeats her virgin song.

“ Cecilia, Lord ! belongs to Thee,
To Thee has made her vow—
May soul and body ever be
Immaculate as now !

“ Cecilia, Lord ! belongs to Thee,
Preserve Thy spouse from shame—
May soul and body ever be
Protected in Thy name ! ”

At last the wedding guests are gone,
His dwelling each one seeks :
And now the spouses are alone,
The prudent Virgin speaks.

"I have a secret thou must share,
Valerian, with me—
An Angel guards with watchful care
My vowed virginity.

"My parents would not hear my voice,
Nor reverence that vow ;
Yet Christ has ever been my choice,
His Angel guards me now."

He said : "I trust thee. What thou art
Remain, with Christ keep troth ;
But, if another had thy heart,
My sword should slay you both.

"Yet, why can I no Angel see ?
Are not such beings bright ?"
"Believe and be baptized," said she—
"Dead souls possess no sight.

"The poor who haunt the Appian Way
Are faithful friends and true ;
Them ask for Urban—he will say
What God will have thee do."

The lion by the lamb was won,
Was welcomed to the Fold—
Valerian saw the Heavenly One,
And all his bride foretold !

From Paradise for each young head
That Angel brought a wreath
Of lilies and of roses red,
For Virgin Martyr's death.

"Since thou hast heard Cecilia's prayer
Make thine, dear noble youth!"
"I pray Tiburtius may share
Our knowledge of the truth."

II

About the streets of heathen Rome
There spreads strange news; 'tis said,
Valerian Christian is become,
With his Cecilia's aid.

A truth still stranger might be told,
Cecilia has not failed
To win his brother to the fold—
Valerian's prayer prevailed.

Tiburtius came, he cried: "I smell
Fresh flowers that scent the room,
Yet Rome has not, as I know well,
A single rose in bloom."

"Our wreaths are hidden from thy sight,"
Valerian replied,
"Of roses red and lilies white,
By hand of Angels tied."

Cecilia then took up the word,
And taught the eager youth:
His generous heart by grace was stirred,
And yielded to the truth.

Valerian to the Catacombs
Had set out over-night—

The Church there gave her slain their tombs,
Thence sent her sons to fight—

Tiburtius also hastened there,
For Baptism to ask :
Saint Urban heard his ardent prayer,
And crowned Cecilia's task.

The news soon reached the Prefect's ears ;
The brothers were accused ;
Command and threat aroused no fears,
His bribes were all refused—

They smiled to hear the death-award,
And left the judgment hall :
While Maximus, who was their guard,
Heard Heaven's gracious call.

At his abode the Martyrs spent
That night in peaceful prayer :
For thither Saint Cecilia went,
And found her loved ones there.

"The morning dawns," at length she cried,
"Go forth to victory !
Go forth, Christ's Soldiers ! Christ's poor Bride
Herself will soon be free !"

III

And through the streets of heathen Rome
There swept a cavalcade
The third time to Valerian's home,
To seize the Christian Maid.

The soldiers and a friendly throng
Besought her to relent—
"I pity *you* compelled to wrong,"
She cried, "I am content!"

The wise and moving words she said
Converted all the band—
A messenger to Urban sped
His presence to demand.

She also to the Prefect sent
Requesting some delay ;
He, little dreaming what was meant,
Supposed she would obey.

But when, at last, the truth was known,
His anger mounted high ;
In cruel mood, in vengeful tone,
He sentenced her to die.

To suffocate and burn the Maid,
Beneath her very roof,
They vainly strove—the flames, afraid
To harm her, kept aloof.

The lictor tried to take her life :
Thrice struck he at her head,
Thrice wounded her, then sheathed his knife,
And from the victim fled.

Cecilia bleeds—they move her not ;
She sends for all Christ's poor,
Her goods to them she doth allot,
Her treasures makes secure.

Cecilia bleeds—the second day
Is come, yet brings not death—
Her converts kneel around and pray,
She strengthening their faith.

Cecilia bleeds—the third is come,
And at the Virgin's call,
Saint Urban consecrates her home,
To be a church for all.

Her own the first pure sacrifice
There offered to the Lord !
Her blood, like That above all price,
At last is all outpoured. . . .

IV

Above the streets of heathen Rome,
In glory's robes arrayed,
The Brothers bear to heavenly home
Christ's Bride, the Martyred Maid.

Revered by death, her body lies
Unchanged from times remote—
A loveliness that never dies,
Fair form, fair wounded throat !

Ah ! thou dost sweetly chant on high,
Without a thought of fear,
The virgin-song, whose harmony
The Lamb delights to hear.

In land estranged, how can we sing
Our songs unto the Lord ?

Aid thou the hand that strikes the string,
The voice that breathes the word.

O lovers of earth's purest art,
Be like your Patroness ;
Make melodies within the heart—
Such music God will bless.

Cecilia ! make poor England sing
As taught of old by Rome—
Yes, help Saint Philip's sons to bring
This English People home !

SAINT KENELM

How fair a land was Albion,
When Satan's power was broke,
And Druid priests no longer dared
To desecrate her oak !

Though savage boars securely lurked
Within the forest shades—
And wolves drove wild deer through the woods,
The thickets and the glades—

Where'er the forest fell away,
And left the green sward bare,
Our fathers fed their peaceful herds,
A harmless wealth and care.

But sometimes in the forest gloom
Dark deeds of blood were done,
In by-gone years, before the Isle
To Christ was fairly won.

The axe destroys the sylvan glade,
The ploughshare follows fast ;
And year by year they sweep away
Some record of the past.

All sight is lost of many shrines,
Where men once thronged in crowds ;
Their holy memories fade away,
Like summer's fleecy clouds.

A crumbling arch alone proclaims
The abbey of the vale—
The name itself now scarce survives
A former well-known tale.

Saint Kenelm once was known and loved,
To English hearts was dear,
And now—his very name sounds strange,
And foreign to the ear.

The good King Kenulph long had sate
Upon the Mercian throne ;
And, dying, gave his sister charge
To guard it for his son.

The boy-king Kenelm in his stead
Was monarch of the land,
And Mercia feared, but took her oath
To serve him heart and hand.

The little king was but a child—
A child of seven years—
But mothers blessed the orphan boy,
Old men renounced their fears.

For wisdom shone upon his brow,
And courage lit his eye ;
The child possessed a kingly heart,
A heart of clemency.

How keen was he for woodland sport,
For pastimes in the hall !
He learned to poise his little spear,
And sound the hunter's call.

And often to his father's friend—
The Hermit of Clentdale—
He went to learn another prayer,
To hear another tale.

And yet this child knew sorrow's pain—
This boy so brave and bright—
He missed his gentle mother's love,
He dreamed sad dreams at night.

Of one he told his faithful nurse—
His trusted, dearest friend—
She felt a dream so ominous
Gave warning of his end.

O nurse ! I dreamed I climbed a tree
All full of lights and bloom,
And men began to cut it down,
To hurl me to my doom.

But on white wings I flew away—
What means my dream to me ? ”
“ Alack ! my nursling, traitors plot,
And angels wait for thee.”

Alone, within her secret bower,
The Lady Quendride mused :
She weighed the gain against the guilt,
If she her trust abused.

The ancient idols of the land
Were cherished in her heart ;
She was a Christian but in name,
And played a double part.

A fearful demon dwelt within
That lady's inmost soul.
How wicked is a woman's heart,
When under such control !

"If but thy lord were Mercia's king,
How proud a queen wert thou !
The crown must welcome his return,
And decorate thy brow !"

Unnatural in purposes,
Unnatural in speed,
She bribed the tutor of the boy—
The two were soon agreed.

"Good Ascobert ! thou wilt perform
This needful deed for me—
I gain a kingdom for my Lord,
An earldom waits for thee.

"We, Ascobert, have long deplored
The spread of this new faith—
For Thor and Wodin, thou must put
This Christian child to death."

The traitor craftily decoyed
That dear confiding child ;
They rambled towards the holy man,
Who dwelt in Clentwood wild.

"Behold, I take my sword and bow—
We perhaps may find him food."
Thus spake he, as they sallied forth,
Alone, to thread the wood.

A dirge-like sound swept through the boughs
And branches overhead ;
It filled the wood with warning moans ;
The lowering sky grew red.

They came upon a gentle hind,
She stirred not at their tread,
For, on the ground, pierced by a shaft,
Her pretty fawn lay dead.

They left the mourning mother there,
And went on silently,
For Kenelm's tender heart was sad,
So merciful was he.

They came upon a rustic cross,
Which blessed their lonely way ;
The pensive boy at once looked bright,
And gladly knelt to pray.

How slight the neck, the skin how fair,
How bright the flaxen hair !
The forest had no flower to match
This lovely child in prayer.

While Kenelm knelt, dark Ascobert
His weapon softly drew,
And severed that white slender neck—
His stroke was swift and true.

With little hands athwart his breast
Saint Kenelm made a cross—
And then, without one spasm of pain,
The child sank on the moss.

His trembling murderer made haste
To scoop a shallow grave—
The turf, that he put back again,
Complete concealment gave.

And then he sped across the wood,
Nor dared to look behind;
The leaves said, Murder! as he passed—
Foul murder! cried the wind.

An angel witness overhead,
With golden-lettered scroll,
Detained a snow-white, timid dove,
To which he tied the roll.

Pathetic message strangely sent!
"In Clentvale, 'neath a thorn,
Of head bereft"—so ran the words—
"Young Kenelm lies, king-born."

To Rome, chief refuge of the weak,
The heaven-sent bird did pass,
And fluttered round the Apostles' tomb,
At which the Pope said mass.

The startled dove at length alit
Upon the Pontiff's hand;
And Ceolwf read the Saxon lines
The bird brought from his land.

“O Holy Father ! Kenelm was
My brother's orphan son :
I'll hie me home to right this wrong
And track the guilty one.”

With prelates and with choristers,
And many a gallant knight,
He came to Clent and found the grave
Where played a sacred light.

And when in grief and joy they bore
The saint from town to town,
The guilty queen, who dared to mock,
With blindness was struck down.

Concealed within a convent cell,
She long did penance meet,
And washed with tears, like Magdalen,
Her Saviour's sacred feet.

In awe, they brought their martyred king
Away to Winchelcombe—
And next his royal father's vault
They built a stately tomb.

Among the Holy Innocents,
He missed not Mercia's crown,
Yet, if we pray right loyally,
He cannot but look down. . . .

In Clent a crystal fountain springs
Beside the Hermit's cell ;

It rises from the Martyr's grave,
'Tis called Saint Kenelm's Well.¹

Dear little king !—dear Saxon saint !
Resume thy former reign !
If men will love thee as of old,
I have not sung in vain.

¹ There is also Saint Kenelm's Chapel. Well and Chapel are both near Rednall, where the Fathers of the Birmingham Oratory have their cemetery. Cardinal Newman is buried there, and Father E. Caswall, who has left a beautiful poem on Saint Kenelm. R.I.P.

CARMINA DEVOTA
DEVOTIONAL PIECES

CREATORI AQUARUM

HARK ! from waterless Bethulia rises Judith's cry :
" God, Creator of the waters, show us clemency.
God of heaven, Lord Almighty, by whom all is made,
God, Creator of the waters, hasten to our aid ! "

As she prayed, so prays creation—man, and beast, and bird—
God, Creator of the waters, Thou hast ever heard.
All, of which Thou art the Maker, in Thy tenderness,
God, Creator of the waters, Thou dost love and bless.

When the corn and vines are drooping in the thirsty plain,
God, Creator of the waters, Thou dost send the rain.
Bleating flocks and lowing cattle, on the river banks,
God, Creator of the waters, bless Thee with their thanks.

Sandiest desert hath *one* fountain—eastern pilgrims tell—
God, Creator of the waters, Giver of the well ;
Arid moor hath water trickling down some mossy rift :
God, Creator of the waters, 'tis Thy wayside gift.

In the dark depths of the forest, where they dare not sing—
God, Creator of the waters, birds will find some spring.
Leopard-tracked, the stag of Hermon upward ever mounts—
God, Creator of the waters, to its crystal founts.

Health, and life, translucent beauty, joy to ear and eye,
God, Creator of the waters, in Thy creature lie.
Yet, I thirst, and as the hart thirsts when the leopards chase :
God, Creator of the waters, Fountain of all grace !

I would find that other fountain in that other land—
God, Creator of the waters, Thou dost understand.
Thou dost understand my longing for that saving flood,
God, Creator of the waters, Giver of Thy Blood !

Not to palm-tree fountain guide me, guide me to the Rood—
God, Creator of the waters, to the Precious Blood.
Lo ! my soul with sin most grievous is all scarlet-hued :
God, Creator of the waters, cleanse me with Thy Blood.

All was shed for my redemption, for my life, my food—
God, Creator of the waters, all the Precious Blood.
Better gift than that which honoured Mary's Motherhood—
God, Creator of the waters, give Thy Precious Blood.

Into wine the water reddened, when that Mother wooed :
God, Creator of the waters, now we drink Thy Blood.
Wash me, feed me, Saviour ! save me—turn my bad to good,
God, Creator of the waters, with the Precious Blood.

To the Christian's Land of Promise mounts Christ's multitude,
God, Creator of the waters, through the Precious Blood.
There, by saints and angels ever be the song renew'd,
God, Creator of the waters, to the Precious Blood !

ECCE STO AD OSTIUM

THE Dweller in the clean of heart
Is asking for a home—
I dare not say unto Him, "Come!"—
I cannot say, "Depart!"

The day is spent, and evening falls;
His head, His sacred locks
Are damp and drenched with dew; He knocks—
He stands, and softly calls.

He whispers; "Open, Sister, Dove,
My Love, My Undefined!"
She lives not here, that chosen child,
His fair one, and His love.

"Set wide thy door, and do not fear—
He will not turn to go."
I am not worthy, Lord, I know,
That Thou shouldst enter here.

"Not evening dusk, not shades of night
Have made Me miss My way—
With mortals I rejoice to stay,
Yea, this is My delight.

"For thee I left My Father's Breast,
His many mansions bright—
Throughout thy life by day and night,
I ask to be thy Guest.

"To seek the sinner I still come,
With sinners still I eat."
Then, Lord, my place is at Thy feet—
Make, make this heart Thy home !

PLAINT OF THE SORROWFUL SOUL

*(From the Italian of Bernard Adimari, Priest of the
Florence Oratory, 1703)*

O MY JESUS ! answer me,
Must this aching,
Must this breaking
Of my heart for ever be ?
If, my Lord, Thou wilt not cure it,
Look on me—I can endure it
While I feel that Thou dost see.

Ah ! my soul can never bear
This day's sorrows
Nor to-morrow's,
If, my Lord, Thou art not there ;
Let her feel Thou dost behold her,
Let the cross upon her shoulder
Be a cross that Thou dost share.

Do I shrink from trial ? No !
But Thou hearest,
Lover dearest,
'Tis with Thee that I must go,
With Thee, welcome pain and trouble !
With Thee, welcome, be it double !
My whole heart would have it so.

Ah ! my poor soul's greatest pain—
Ever burning,
Ever yearning
In Thy presence to remain—
Is not Thy deserved correction,
But Thy scorn and Thy rejection ;
This compels me to complain.

Wilt Thou hearken? Yes, oh, yes !
For I languish
In mine anguish,
I shall die, dear Lord, unless
To my heart I win its Lover,
And my former joys recover—
Ah ! restore my happiness !

God, my Saviour ! why, oh why
Thus forsake me ?
Ah ! retake me
To Thy favour, hear my cry !
Even when the pain most presses,
'Tis not pain, 'mid Thy caresses,
On the cross with Thee to die !

DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH

SERAPHIM our God are praising
In His dwelling-place on high,
Where the happy saints are gazing
On the Blessed Trinity—
Lamb of God ! while they adore Thee
In the land of life and light,
Here, we sinners kneel before Thee,
And find favour in Thy sight.

Lord, the Heart of Mary drew Thee
To Thy Mother full of grace—
That same Heart we offer to Thee
As Thy home and resting place.
Yes, dear Lord, Thy habitation
Gratefully we dedicate
To the Ark of Thy salvation,
To the Heart Immaculate.

Bread of Life, sent by the Father,
Daily Bread above all price !
Here, true worshippers will gather
For the Holy Sacrifice.
Here, Saint Philip's homely preaching
Will attract us night by night—
Echoes of the Gospel teaching,
Welcome gleams of Gospel light.

Wearied strangers here shall rest them,
 Peace, they cannot comprehend,
 Shall be theirs when Thou hast blest them,
 Unknown Saviour, Hidden Friend !
 Prince of Pastors, grant them pity,
 See, they haunt Thy Mother's shrine !
 Have compassion on this city,
 On these other sheep of Thine.

Make of all one congregation—
 Priests and people, rich and poor,
 Roman Saint, and English nation—
 One in Thee for evermore.
 To Thy Mother's Heart confide us,
 From that royal House of Gold,
 Good and gentle Shepherd, guide us
 To Thy Father's heavenly fold.

CONFRATERNITY HYMN TO SAINT PATRICK

DEAR Saint Patrick ! Holy Father,
Erin's great Apostle, bless
Those whom Philip's children gather
Round the Throne of happiness.
Where, our heart's true love out-pouring,
On the Sacrifice intent,
'Tis our joy to kneel adoring
The Most Holy Sacrament.

While we toil for those we cherish,
By our Lord our souls are fed ;
While we work for meats that perish,
He bestows the Living Bread.
May faith never doubt or falter,
But discern His Flesh and Blood :
May love urge us to the altar,
Hungering for the Heavenly Food.

Keep us when we go forth daily
To the needful work of life ;
Pray that we may labour gaily,
Free from murmuring and strife.
When to all the heavy-laden
Dusk and darkness bring release,
Lead us to the Mother-Maiden,
To the Lamb, our Rest, and Peace.

Dearest Patron, bless and hear us
Who in exile sadly roam ;
From thy bliss and glory cheer us,
Bring us to our heavenly home.
Beautiful on Erin's mountains
Are the paths thy feet have trod,
Fairer yet the lawns and fountains
In the Paradise of God.

CHILDREN'S HYMN TO ST. EDMUND

FOR ST. EDMUND'S, HOUGHTON

DEAR Saint Edmund ! deign to love us,
For to us thou art most dear.
Patron Saint and kind Protector !
We can always feel thee near.

Home is brighter since thy coming,
Since a Saint protects the place.
Father, mother—all are happy ;
Thou hast brought us peace and grace.

When, like us, thou wert a student,
Thou didst see the Holy Child :
After lessons, during play-time
Jesus met thee, and He smiled.

In our play-time and our study,
While we work, and when we pray,
May the same most Holy Jesus
Be at hand by night and day.

Thou wast once a great Archbishop,
And the mighty didst withstand—
For thy children thou hast suffered
Exile in a foreign land.

And our fathers were thy children,
Were the flock whom thou didst feed—
Prowling wolf dared not attack them,
They preserved the ancient creed.

Now, the wandering sheep are scattered,
One no longer, as of old.
Men forget there can be only
One True Shepherd and one Fold.

Make them heed the voice of Jesus,
Love His Mother, whom they miss—
Learn again the way to heaven,
To our everlasting bliss.

IN PACE IN IDIPSUM DORMIAM
ET REQUIESCAM

(From the Italian of Sister Mary Rose Giannini)

SLEEP, little child, whom Christ has taken,
Rest in the Home of earth's forsaken,
Sleep in thy Saviour's Breast !
Sleep on, in peace and trust unshaken,
Sleep, till He gently bids thee waken
Where reigns Eternal Rest.

LOVE AND SUFFERING

(From the Italian of Sister Mary Rose Giannini)

How fair is Love betrothed to Pain !
A faithful heart great gifts can gain
By harbouring the blessed twain.

My soul ! fear not their burning fire :
Those thirsting flames of keen desire
'Mid floods of sweetness will expire.

Enkindle, Lord ! Thy fire anew ;
For, painless love can scarce be true—
Dear Lord ! for Love and Pain I sue.

INVITATION TO THE SINNER

(From the Italian of Sister Mary Rose Giannini)

JESUS, dearest Lord, grant light—
Sinners stray in piteous plight,
While the sight of Thee would move
Hardest, coldest hearts to love.

Lord, what more couldst Thou have done?
Their's the fault who hate the sun—
Their's the blindness, their's the blame,
Who in gloom hide guilt and shame.

Sinner, come ! thy Jesus meet—
Kneel and kiss thy Saviour's Feet—
See Him stand there, see Him wait—
Sinner, wherefore hesitate ?

Greater love He could not show
Than to wait for thee till now—
O ungrateful sinner ! move—
Give thy Saviour love for love !

PERSEVERANCE

*(From a Prayer of St. Mary Magdalen of Pazzi for
a wavering novice)*

DEAREST Lord ! that Dove of thine
Is escaping from Thy hands !
Hasten ! Lord—Thy cords entwine—
Ah ! secure it with Thy bands—
With the strong and tender love
Of Thy meek and humble Heart—
Fold the little, fluttering dove,
Lest the foolish thing depart.

Wherefore quit, poor bird, the cleft
Of that saving, sheltering Rock ?
Wherefore seek a world just left ?
Can those wings sustain the shock ?
Rest at peace within the Wound
Of thy Saviour's open Side—
There alone is refuge found,
When abroad the tempests ride.

Fold those silly fluttering wings—
Fold them meekly on thy breast,
Knowing well the world ne'er brings
Either happiness or rest ;
'Tis a wide and cruel sea—
And its waves are wild and dark—
Thou wilt find no olive-tree,
Bide, poor bird ! within the Ark.

ALL SAINTS

OH ! is not Sion fair ?
Seems it not home ?
Would we were safely there !
Lord ! bid us come !

Hark to those joyful songs ?
Look at the light !
Number the countless throngs,
Flashing and bright !

All Saints is kept to-day—
Paradise rings ;
Hark how the harpers play
On golden strings !

See ! where the Saviour stands,
Greeting His Saints—
Hemmed in by loving bands,
Free from restraints.

Near Him, the Queen behold,
Clothed with the sun—
Hail to thee, House of Gold !
Hail, Chosen One !

A PRIEST'S POEMS

Hark ! the Nine Choirs sing
Rapturous strains :
For the Immortal King
Over them reigns.

There the grand Prophets pass—
Headed by John—
Over the sea of glass,
On towards the Throne.

There the Apostles rest,
Wearied no more,
Watching their vessel blest
Nearing the shore.

Palms the brave Martyrs bear,
Rubied their stoles,
And the meek victors wear
Bright aureoles.

Lo ! at their Master's board
Confessors rest—
He, as He pledged His Word,
Waits on each guest.

Virgins as white as snow,
Purer than light,
Sing and pass to and fro
In the Lamb's sight.

Oh ! is not Sion fair ?
Seems it not home ?
Would we were safely there !
Lord, bid us come.

STATUTUM EST

“It is appointed unto men once to die.”—(Heb. ix. 27).

DEATH follows all—Death whom we dread—
Life's shadow with the soundless tread.
Pale Phantom ! is my hour nigh ?
It is appointed—all must die—
Statutum est.

Speak, spectral foe ! All do not fear,
Nor quail before thy brandished spear ;
Some even would not call thee foe,
For thine is oft a friendly blow—
Statutum est.

Man may not choose his hour of death—
A boon divine is every breath—
In thought we choose who claim no choice,
With wills obedient to the voice—
Statutum est.

What think ye, then, of death in Spring—
When nestlings try their new-fledged wing,
While others lie beneath the nest,
Dead, so though young ? Is Spring the best ?
Statutum est.

No. Neither hush the song of May,
Nor cloud the calm of Summer day—
Nor let the eyes that weep for you
Miss all the Autumn's golden hue—
Statutum est.

Cold Winter comes, with better claim,
With age, and blindness, feeble frame
Depicted in his features grim,
'Twere easy to take death from him—
Statutum est.

Deaths one by one but little shock
Survivors in a fated flock,
And Winter's moan and tempest-blast
Remind us that for all at last—
Statutum est.

When all are wrecked, 'tis scarcely grief
To see men torn from off the reef ;
The storm-shout drowns each stifled cry,
The wave-dirge warns that all must die—
Statutum est.

White gulls, inland through stress of wind,
Seem tame through fear—so men grow kind
And patient in the Winter drear.
Then let friends part when most felt dear—
Statutum est.

The Spring would bring her choicest green,
Hope's *immortelle* and Pity's screen—
And friends would wander to the grave,
And watch its tall grass gently wave—
Statutum est.

The cherished name each Summer rill
Would in its music murmur still ;
So would the scent of favourite flowers
Embalm the friend of former hours—
Statutum est.

The redbreast, in the pensive days
Of Autumn, might recall these lays,
The ripe fruit, and the golden grain—
Seed sown by God to rise again—
Statutum est.

And in next Winter's season bleak,
How kindly friends would think and speak
Of those who shared last Winter's mirth,
Now buried deep in cold dark earth !
Statutum est.

But, Blessed Faith ! it matters not—
The time, the manner, nor the spot—
We choose not, Lord ! nor make complaints—
We pray to die as died Thy Saints !
Statutum est.

THE JUDGMENT

(From the French of Ven. Grignon de Montfort)

THE Lord prepares to show His might,
Time, dream-like time shall be no more ;
Affrighted earth re-enters horrid night—
No more shall ages vex the eternal shore.

I hear the trumpet's startling blast—
Dismay and dread the boldest tame :
The vengeful lightnings of the Lord flash fast,
And wrap the trembling world in final flame.

Laid low, the riven mountains lie
Engulfed in ruin, nought is spared ;
The ocean flees away with wailing cry—
The end of earth by Chaos is declared.

Leave, lifeless dust ! the empty tomb—
Pale corpses, hid away from sight !
All shall be judged, and all shall hear the Doom—
Arise, ye dead ! God calls you back to light.

Christ comes—men gaze in silent awe—
His Cross chills guilty hearts with dread ;
The sinner shudders who transgressed the law,
The just man hardly dares lift up his head.

Christ judges all, and judgment is declared—
“Ye Blessed of My Father, come
Possess the kingdom which has been prepared
For your reward and everlasting home !

“Depart from Me, ye cursed ! Hence !
Go gnash your teeth where demons dwell,
'Mid flames prepared to punish their offence,
Depart to everlasting fire of hell.”

Eternity of pain and woe !
How bitterly art thou begun !
While Sion's streets with bliss shall ever flow,
Her happy Saints shine brighter than the sun.

Great God of Justice ! who will be
The object of eternal ire ?
What dark foreboding now oppresses me ?
Woe to the victim salted with that fire !

O Judge, severe and righteous ! I
With reason dread the Judgment Day—
My sins are great, but hear Thy Blood's loud cry !
My sins are great, but tears wash sins away !

CARMINA MÆSTA
IN MEMORIAM

FABER'S GRAVE

Obiit. XXVI. SEPT., MDCCCLXIII

Vixit Annos XLIX

In Congr. XV.

THOUSANDS who mourned at Faber's death
Ask for his resting-place—
Even poor strangers to the faith
Come, as if drawn by grace.

Where is he buried? we are come
Not to the Poet or Sage,
But to the Priest of God whose tomb
Merits our pilgrimage.

Where is he buried? he who wrote
Hymns that he might have heard
Chanted in heaven, whose echoed note
Sounds in each holy word.

Where is he buried? he so true—
True to his God and creed,
True to the "treasure old and new,"
True to the Church in need.

Where is he buried? Have ye made
Room for your noble dead
Here, in the church where he preached and prayed,
Here, where his Mass was said?

Under that altar he should be,
Faithful and watchful found—
Sailors are buried near their sea,
Soldiers on battle ground.

Where is he buried ? thus they ask
Eagerly day by day.
Piety shrinks not from its task,
Well does love know the way. . . .

Here is he buried ! look around,
All is just as he planned—
Gardens, lawns, and burial ground,
Drawn by his own dear hand.

Here is he buried ! see the trees—
Then, only nursling plants ;
Now, they make dirges in the breeze
During the robin's chants.

Here is he buried ! skylarks sing
Up in the clear blue sky,
Ere they descend on loving wing
Down to the nest hard by.

Here is he buried ! cypress trees,
Roses in endless bloom—
Lead the heart's faithful memories
Back to Christ's garden tomb.

Forty-nine years from birth till death,
Death in the Autumn days,
Fifteen with Philip—the grave-stone saith ;
No other word of praise.

Here is he buried ! others too
Sleep here—God's will be done !
Some of the graves are green, some new—
Ranged round this central one.

Hark to yon City's ceaseless roar,
Reaching these quiet graves !
Life calls death—but the silent shore
Heeds not the senseless waves.

There they fulfilled their priestly life,
There bravely fought the fight,
Finding here, after toil and strife,
Rest and the longed-for night.

Asking assistance to be brave,
Help to endure each loss,
Often we come to our Father's grave
Close to the holy Cross.

Sweet is it ever to see that Sign
Shedding by day and night
Beautiful blessings, peace divine,
Shadows more loved than light.

'Tis not the De Profundis bell,
'Tis not the Requiem Mass,
But it is heaven's sacred spell
Laid on the dewy grass.

Here is he buried ! see the mound—
Lowly yet ever blest ;
Thus, in St. Mary's holy ground,
Father and Brethren rest.

Requiescat in Pace.

THE REDBREAST

OF my friends it were folly to tell
Which is dearest, if dearest there be ;
Of the birds of the air, I know well
That the Redbreast is dearest to me.
Sweeter music I never have heard
Than the Robin's miraculous powers ;
I feel like the Monk with the Bird,
When a hundred years seemed a few hours.

Nearly all other birds only sing
While the sunshine enlivens the earth :
Joyous minstrels, they follow their king—
Mine alone hath no music for mirth.
So he sighs, and sings sorrowful strains,
When the lilies and roses are fled,
And the lavender only remains,
Lending Autumn her scents for the dead.

When the golden leaves drop one by one,
Or are swept by the wind off the spray,
Where the fruit that was hid from the sun
Hangs unripe or shrunk up with decay—
When the mist, cold and gray, like a shroud
Clings in folds round each skeleton tree,
And the whole sky is one dismal cloud,
Until dusk settles down on the lea—

When our spirits, in Summer so high,
Are depressed by these sad Autumn days—
When the brightest grow grave, and a sigh
The foreboding of sorrow betrays,—
Let us find out the favourite haunts
Where the notes of the Robin are heard,
For the heart gets the comfort it wants
From the voice of that innocent bird.

There's the blackbird pipes boldly in Spring,
And the thrush bravely seconds his song ;
Then the lark mounts and sings on the wing,
And the swallow, while darting along—
Next, we hear the low voice of the dove
In the deep peace pervading the glades,
Till the nightingales, sleepless with love,
Thrill the groves with their sweet serenades.

They delight us—they make us feel brave,
And they gladden our spirits awhile—
But at length arrive griefs far too grave
To be cured with a song or a smile.
Oft they come with that last fragrant scent
Given forth, ere they fade, by the plants—
And 'tis then that the Robin is sent
To console us with soft, plaintive chants.

Ah ! the death-room is darkened and dim,
Only moanings of anguish are heard—
But there steals in a human-like hymn,
'Tis the song of this sorrowing bird.
And you hear it again at the grave,
At the tomb of the friend whom you weep.
'Twas a sigh—yet what solace it gave !
'Twas a dirge—yet it lulled grief to sleep.

Who, then, guides him to houses of grief?
Who directs him to lone, silent graves?
Ah ! who sends him with hidden relief,
Unseen alms of a pity that saves?
It is God. For all creatures of earth
And of heaven above serve our God,
Who reveres all He made, and gives worth
To the least blade of grass on the sod.

And a charge unto each is assigned—
To the angels, to saints, to the skies,
To the mountains, the waves and the wind,
To the beasts with their half-human cries—
'Tis to tell of God's glory and might,
Of His beautiful kingdom above :
And they fill us with purest delight,
For they speak of an Infinite Love.

But when trials and sorrows come down,
When the dearest and best must depart,
And our life never more will wear crown—
Oh, how lonely they leave the poor heart !
Sorrow-laden, we wearily wend,
Bent with sadness, to hide in the woods,—
For we dread our most intimate friend
When oppressed with these terrible moods.

When the heart breaks, its fountains are dried,
And the worn eyes demand tears in vain—
God alone knows the grief we would hide,
He has felt the heart's bitterest pain—
He, who hid to be sad and to pray,
Marks the place of our anguish and prayer,
And He will not reprove, if we say
It is He bids the Redbreast sing there !

Robin Redbreast, thy song makes us fit
To return to our wearisome strife ;
At thy voice we resolve to submit
To the bitter-sweet chalice of life.
There are mercies and pity divine,
There are tender compassions unseen,
And to sing of these mercies is thine,
At the season when sorrows are keen.

I have loved thee, tame bird, from the first,
From the time I strewed crumbs for thy food ;
Though a rough, cruel child, at the worst
Unto thee I was gentle and good.
O my mother's dear, favourite bird,
With the Blood of the Cross on thy breast !
Little friend, all thy plainings were heard,
As we watched her departure to rest.

Gentle bird, it is well thou hast sighs,
For thou bringest to mind the dark bier,
And the holiest memories rise,
Still bedewed with the heart's saddest tear.
Cease ! cease ! No repiner am I,
And the time for such grief is long o'er ;
God, who died, let His own Mother die,
And above, there are partings no more !

Sweetest Songster, sing on—pay no heed
To my murmurs : for peace comes at last ;
Thou hast sighs, and thy breast seems to bleed
For the pains of the present and past.
Every mourner who hears thee can tell
How thy song, while its melody flows,
Soothes the heart with divine mercy's spell,
With a message from Heaven's repose.

AT A GRAVE

"GONE, for ever gone—
So shed no tear!"
Said the cruel stone,
With voice austere.

"Loved, for ever loved—
So shed no tear!"
Sighed the wind that moved
The yew-tree drear.

"Blest, for ever blest—
So shed no tear!"
Sang a bright redbreast,
Soft, sweet, and clear.

Blest, belov'd, and gone—
But doubly dear!
Hearts must make their moan,
Must shed their tear!

TO A DEAD CHILD

Is that a child's voice I hear mingling
In the musical call of each wave?
My thoughts hasten back o'er the ocean,
Isabel, to thy lone, little grave.

In death, thou didst look like an angel
Fast asleep in a pure human sleep—
'Twas sad in a strange land to leave thee,
Else, thy lot would have scarce made us weep.

My sister, what is it disturbs thee?
Little girl, sleep in innocent rest!
We chose thee a bed in God's acre,
Under trees where the birds build their nest.

We buried thee close by a river,
Where it sobbed on the quiet, green bank—
We thought of the mighty Atlantic,
In whose bosom that broad river sank.

The waves whisper to me about thee,
While I look towards the West from our shore;
As if they had brought thee to visit
The home of thy childhood once more.

Well, Child, it was Water that bore thee
From the Font to angelical choirs—
Thy soul was not shriven with Penance,
Was untempered with Pentecost Fires.

Then, come like a gull on the ocean,
With the voice I remember so well—
Little child ! from the Kingdom of Heaven
Let thy love bring thee here, Isabel !

TO A DEAD BOY

How short a time ago we play'd
Together on the lawn, nor thought of this !
Amid the garden shrubs we stray'd,
Where trustful birds their nests had made,
As though they knew they need not be afraid—
Ah me ! those hours were hours of sinless bliss.

What meetings we then gaily plann'd,
What games and tales when Vespers should be done !
Now, thou art playing with the Boy-Saint band—
How didst thou reach alone the heavenly land—
Thou, who wouldst ever cling unto my hand,
So little used to play or walk alone !

Gone ! with that truthful fearless eye !
The pretty gracefulness of all thy ways—
With so much promise of gentle courtesy—
How could we think a child so fair would die ?
Well ! we must bravely check the rising sigh,
And in thy early death still give God praise.

Thy silent Guardian Angel knew,
While I built hopes upon thy grace and charms,
That even thy very months of life were few—
Indeed, I might have guessed what God would do—
The sun soon takes from flowers their treasured dew,
And God the brightest from the mother's arms !

The beauty of thy thoughtful face
Had always more a look of heaven than earth ;
Angelic gravity revealed how grace
Was doing well the work of years apace,
And fast preparing thee to take thy place,
Dear Child ! in heaven's blest worship and its mirth.

A BROTHER'S LAMENT

(From the Neapolitan)

Two graceful, startled fawns,
Fearing man's face,
Fled ere the morning dawns,
Safe from the chase.

Two pretty, gentle doves,
Timid and meek,
Flown with their virgin loves
Jesus to seek.

Thus are my favourites fled—
Both, both are gone—
Thus are my sisters dead—
God's will be done !

Plucked are the flow'rets fair,
But they are blest—
Gathered by God to wear
On His own breast !

MOURNING

IN the forest, trees are sighing,
As in grief, all day and night,
Over prostrate giants lying,
That were vanquished in the fight ;
When the hurricanes assembled,
And advanced with onslaught dread,
Till the mighty monarchs trembled,
And at last lay low and dead.

When the storm was past, what flinging
Of the fragrances of flowers !
And what merry sport, what singing
Of the birds in leafy bowers !
But the great trees stand there grieving,
Moaning round each vacant place ;
And their long arms, shadow-weaving,
Hide with palls the fallen race.

There are homes where death has entered,
Struck the fairest, stateliest down —
Those in whom all hearts were centred
Were the ones he made his own.
O the tears shed for their dying !
O the quick return to play !
Hark ! the trees are ever sighing
In the forest, night and day.

CARMINA CASUALIA
VERSE-DRIFT

ARISAIG

THERE'S a church in Scotia's Highlands,
 'Mid the heather and the rocks,
Looking out upon the ocean,
 Guiding home the mountain flocks—
It was built up for his people
 By a priest with snow-white locks.

Though they dwell in lowly cabins,
 He well loves the hardy race ;
He has lived his life among them
 In that distant rugged place ;
He reveres the Church's children
 Whom he serves in peace and grace.

And the church he built is stately,
 And its tower is seen for miles,
And for miles the bell's sweet tolling
 Brings from glens and wild defiles
An unchanged, unsaddened people,
 In whose looks the old Faith smiles.

Now, the beautiful high altar
 Is of marble, carved with care,
For the Sacrifice Unbloody
 Priest and people offer there ;
But the nave is still unfinished,
 And the organ loft is bare.

And the singers too are wanting—
Though the voices might be found—
All-untaught, untrained the people
Are content to kneel around,
Hearing Mass in hymnless silence
With devout prayer's murmured sound.

Yet at Mass, I once heard chanting,
All too sweet for mortal tongue—
Ah ! it was not voice of angel,
And it could not be the young—
'Twas a little robin redbreast,
In the organ-loft he sung.

It was good to kneel with people
Whose attire was coarse and plain,
Good, instead of sacred music
Sometimes sadly like profane,
Just to hear that robin redbreast
Blessing God with plaintive strain.

Kindly people of the Highlands !
Be contented midst your herds.
And do thou, good priest, preach ever
In the homely Gaelic words—
Though there be no other music
Than the singing of the birds.

SICKNESS

DAY after day, His warning word God spoke—

I heard, but strove to hide in folly's crowd ;

Night after night, He called to me aloud—

Yet, though I knew 'twas He the silence broke,

My guilty fears and not my sorrow woke.

I heard the Voice, I felt the searching Eye—

I would not kneel, I dared not move to fly,

But sullenly refused Christ's sweetest yoke.

He pitied me, and still my welfare planned ;

He loved me as a Father, though He frowned—

With saving sickness made me understand

How wise it were to heed His slightest sound.

He pitied me, for lightly pressed His hand ;

He loved me, for He let me kiss its Wound.

FRATERNAL CORRECTION

AH ! there are untamed spirits, rough and rude,
Rugged as unwrought iron, unsubdued
Till fire hath filled it with a glowing heat—
And love alone with such souls can compete.
But, soon as love hath made these souls less like
Their wretched self, some deem it time to strike—
Unskilful smiths ! they only beat the mass
Into its own cold hardness—while, alas !
Had they loved on, and not been violent,
How easily the stubborn had been bent !
Reproof that irritates, and frequent test
Make untried tempers brittle at the best—
Morose and murmuring, instead of gay,
For perseverance less and less they pray—
Till, finally, it needs but one blow more
To strew the shivered fragments on the floor.

THE SEA

BENEDICITE MARIA ET FLUMINA DOMINO

I WALKED along the shore,
And thought not of the sea :
I never dreamed before
It could have need of me.

I heard a murmured sound—
A sound as if of prayers ;
The wavelets were, I found,
The only worshippers.

A people without priest,
Without an altar—they
Contrived to keep their feast,
And blessed God in their way.

My heart since seems to me
A consecrated thing ;
For *there* the broad blue sea
Made God its offering.

THE MARINERS' CROSS

(An Incident during the Franco-Prussian War)

Succour the sick and the wounded,
Pray for the souls of the slain ;
Great is the mercy—but sometimes
Duties still sadder remain.

Neighbours steal looks of compassion,
Whisper that someone should speak—
Say, “ He is living no longer,”
Braving the broken heart's shriek.

Thus, in poor France a fond mother
Prays for her warrior son ;
Mother and sister expect him,
All others know he is gone.

Thousands in pity behold them,
Pray at the Mariners' Cross
Day after day, for his safety—
No one dares utter their loss.

Fishermen out on the waters,
Watch for the sorrowful sight ;
Even the shore-birds, grown fearless,
On the lone Cross will alight.

Moistened with tears, that dear symbol
Quiets affection's alarms—
Shining with spray, guides the sailor
Back to its sheltering arms.

Were her son out on the ocean,
When its worst hurricane raves,
Women would gather to help her
Call on the Lord of the waves.

Whirlwinds sink down when He bids them,
Folding their terrible wings ;
Why are men's passions more stubborn,
Harder the proud hearts of kings ?

When will these tempests of bullets
Learn to be still and adore ?
Their victims perish in numbers
Storms never cast on the shore !

Someone of those who are waiting
Ocean to give up their dead,
Surely, might tell the two pilgrims,
That his last charge has been led.

Struck down he lies 'midst his comrades,
Dead for his country and home,
After his hardships and dangers
'Mid the Crusaders of Rome.

Foliage and branches lie scattered
Over the field of the slain,
Heaped like the wrecks of a navy,
Strewn on the breast of yon main. . . .

Mother and sister ! a martyr
Slumbers beneath the green sod,
Dying at last for his country,
After his battles for God.

Pray that your France leave the furnace,
Holy and cleansed from her dross,
Be this your prayer at the headland,
Under the Mariners' Cross.

THE HAUNTED ABBEY

ON the western coast
Lurks a monastery,
Haunted by a ghost,
When ghosts used to be.

Long ago 'twas built,
No one knows by whom—
Perhaps for vow, for guilt,
Perhaps memorial tomb.

Austin Friars dwelt
Many ages there,
Toiled by day, and knelt
In the night for prayer.

Near them stood their church,
Right above the dell;
High o'er larch and birch
Rose its tower and bell.

Bold and grand by day,
Beacon in the night,
Seamen steered their way
By its well-known light.

And the bell was rung
That the boats might list,
When the cliffs were hung
With the ocean mist.

Yes, the midnight fire
Warned them to beware ;
And the midnight choir
Helped them with its prayer.

For the church was close
To the very verge
Of a cliff that rose
Over rocks and surge.

Thither, to and fro
From their calm abode
Would the friars go,
By a narrow road.

Downward went the dell,
Deeply, silently—
'Twas as if some spell
Drew it to the sea.

Vessels on the sea
Passed across, as if
Birds from tree to tree,
Gulls from cliff to cliff.

When the Wormwood Star
Fell upon the North,
Victims to the war,
Friars were put forth.

To the torture-room,
Into banishment,
As might be their doom,
Austin Friars went.

Long their abbey stood,
Sacked from floor to roof,
In the solitude—
All men kept aloof.

But the peasants heard,
In the church, a man
Desecrate God's Word,
Brave Saint Peter's ban.

He blasphemed the Saints,
Mocked the holy Mass,
Threatened with distrains
Those who said, Alas !

'Twas at first a shock,
Filled all with dismay ;
But, in time the flock,
Untaught, went astray.

And in time there came
Men with blood-stained hands,
Shameless in their shame,
To possess the lands.

But all things, they found,
Went from bad to worse—
With the Church's ground
Came the Church's Curse.

G

And though monks were gone,
No man dared to boast—
All were gone but one,
And that one—a Ghost !

Yes, there was a Ghost,
In the habit black—
Not that he was lost,
But a soul sent back

From the prison vaults,
Where they pay their debt,
And atone for faults—
One remained there yet.

Pacing the Monk's Path,
This poor Ghost appeared,
More in grief than wrath,
Yet of course was feared.

Sad he well might be !
For he missed the prayer,
And the charity
Of his brethren there.

Sad, because he saw
All the first-born die—
Victims to the law
Of Church property

Thus they came and went,
Luckless, wondering,
In direct descent
None inheriting.

Sad, because *his* sight
Brought the doomed heirs death,
Like some fatal blight,
Or a serpent's breath.

Hark ! once more he hears
Children's voices call,
Laughter, boyish cheers
In the Abbey hall—

“ Holy Lord ! how long
Must Thy vengeance last,
For our ancient wrong
In those days long past ?

“ Innocent young feet
Hasten now this way ;
Ah ! I dread to meet
One more hapless prey ! ”

Scarcely had he spoke,
Ere, with merry laugh,
Boy and girl they broke
Right into the Path.

Fairest of the fair,
These two children stood,
Saw the friar there,
In the lonely wood.

But they did not see
Guardian Angels near,
Signing silently
To the monk austere.

Lo, the hand he raised
Is upheld to bless,
On each head is placed
With a kind caress.

Brother, sister saw
Features sad and sweet—
Watched the monk withdraw,
Heard no sound of feet.

Prattling as they went,
Soon they told their nurse.
What the meeting meant
She well knew—the Curse !

She in misery
Scarce knew what she said,
Told them heedlessly
They had seen the dead.

“Nay, he meant no harm,
We were kissed almost ;
We felt no alarm,
Though he was a Ghost.

“Neither of us ran,
Neither of us shrunk ;
When I am a man,
I will be a monk.”

As the brave boy said,
They were none the worse ;
Though they saw the dead,
They escaped the Curse.

For in after years
He found out the truth—
Joined the Church, and wears
The garb he chose in youth.

House and Abbey lands
To the Church went back.
Loosened were the bands
Of the Ghost in black.

And though some pretend
He still haunts the vale,
Penance had an end—
Now, 'tis but a tale.

Many pay no heed
To these warnings dread,
Though no sons succeed
In their father's stead.

“Bryan, all is lost !”
Dying Henry saith.
Yes, 'twas at this cost
England lost the Faith !

Englishmen ! be wise !
Too long have ye err'd ;
Love not Luther's lies
Better than Christ's Word.

Peter is the Rock
Where Christ's Church doth stand,
Peter feeds Christ's Flock
In each Christian land.

SECRETS OF THE NIGHT

To prophets Night has shown celestial light,
Light flashing from the surface of that Sea
Whose crystal waves with molten fires unite,
And play before the Throne eternally—
Yet even prophets know not how to reach
These high and holy things with mortal speech.

But Night has other secrets of her own—
She teaches them by visions and by dreams,
By spirits' whispered voices makes them known,
Or places them in fancy's brightest gleams,
Declares anew some long-forgotten truth,
The truth we saw so well in sinless youth.

Yes ! gentle grace and innocence of heart
Discern the True, the Beautiful, the Good,
Discern the Heavenly in the minstrel's art,
And know what Science never understood—
The lonely poet falters out his hymn,
A child's heart echoes those of Seraphim.

Like men whose lives are spent in prayer and fast,
Her poets look for Night—nor count the hours
Of patient watchfulness, serenely pass'd
In moon-lit garden, or by ruin'd towers—
Such vigils weary not : for, in return,
The secrets of the Night her lovers learn.

Then visions visit them—then truths descend
With silent dews, or glide from mountain caves,
Oft-times with forest echoes they will blend,
Oft mingle with the music of the waves—
They come at night—their coming Night foretells ;
Oh, miss them not through slumber's murmured spells !

How fair is Night ! Ah, let us never rest
Before we have perused her placid face.
The mother bends above her darling's nest
Where he is waiting for one more embrace,
Though prettily pretending that he sleeps
Till some unbidden tear betrays she weeps.

Then springs the child, and throws his eager arms
Around her neck, soon drops he back again,
And smiling falls asleep, the while she charms
Her tears away with kisses that remain
To bless his dreams long after he has hid
Those merry eyes beneath their dark-fringed lid.

Thus should we wait the soft approach of Night,
And greet the world's first mother, ere we sleep—
The world's first mother ; for, there was no light
Before God spoke and made it. O'er the deep
Night brooded in her boundless majesty,
And only Darkness was allowed to be.

Divinest Light and Being dwelt above
That Darkness and that yearning Nothingness—
No Heaven, no earth, no universe of love,
But Chaos, with no form and no impress—
Above was God, the Uncreated Light,
Below, unvivified, unconscious Night.

One word was spoken by Omnipotence—
 And, at the call of that dread Attribute,
 There issued forth a world of life and sense ;
 Night's barrenness no longer made her mute ;
 For Night was spread the starry firmament,
 Night's children slept beneath their mother's tent.

Her home no longer childless, happy Night—
 Made mother to a whole created earth—
 In softest beauty of her own bedight,
 With mother's sadness and with mother's mirth,
 Glides to her children, folds them to her breast,
 And bids them sleep, the while she guards their rest.

.
 Hast ever wakened suddenly, and heard
 A sound as if of music lingering near,
 Like low night-warbling of some timid bird,
 And sweet as song of sister to the ear—
 A sound that made thy quivering heart-strings thrill,
 Like harp's soft answer to the zephyr's will ?

Go forth, and thou shalt find thy soul hath caught
 The resonance of harmonies around—
 With melody the Night like Heaven is fraught,
 Where " many waters " make the hills resound.
 Yea, earth and vaulted sky, with one accord,
 Hail Night's approach, and bid her " bless the Lord."

And first, a Spirit near thee sings how fair
 Is she who brings men rest, dark-mantled Night ;
 Then others tell, in sweet and solemn air,
 Her Silence most majestic— Then, unite
 The chanting choirs, to spread o'er sea and earth
 The Terror that precedes pale Morning's birth.

.

THE BEAUTY OF NIGHT

YES, Night is fair, and thou canst see how fair ;
For, note the deep and universal rest—
The sleep of folded flowers—the balmy air
Sweet with their breathings on earth's tranquil breast.
Yes, wander where we list, all things declare
A thousand, thousand times that Night is fair.

How calm yon lake ! sought by the moon's bright ray—
Its waters, wooed and won, appear no more
Than liquid light, except where wild fowl play,
And send gay wavelets glittering to the shore,
Or where some little fish in silver coat
With giddy gladness skips across the moat.

O childhood's home ! unseen for many a day,
Thou art one vision during hours of sleep—
Thy dwellers all dispersed, far, far away—
Too many dead, too few left here to weep !
Ah ! thoughts of home haunt every wakeful night,
A chastened sorrow and a pure delight.

Bear witness to the beauty of the Night,
O Memory ! tell the secrets of that room,
Where sleep was blest, where boyhood's dreams were bright,
Where dancing moonbeams strayed in through the gloom
Two giant lime-trees cast, which towered near,
And were beheld with mingled love and fear.

And often, white-robed forms and white arms bare,
That rested on the leaf-framed window-sill,
Drew flocks of dusky bats to circle there—
The tiny anger of their voices shrill,
When we would try to get them in our power,
Made quiet mirth for many a stolen hour.

The moon still flecks those walls ; the tuneful leaves
Still dance and flutter there, beneath her rays ;
And there my own poor heart still fondly cleaves ;
But now, unheard the wondering ivy plays,
And rustling taps against the window-pane—
In by-gone years it had not knocked in vain !

How stately were those twin gigantic trees !
Those mighty branches, where the peafowl went
To roost aloft ! What golden flowers the bees
Took honey from, while shaking down the scent
With thanks most musical ! We children played
By day, and slept by night beneath their shade.

No heart forgets the home of former days—
We see ourselves as children with the rest ;
We call to mind the loving eyes, whose gaze
Dwelt fondly upon all—the Mother blest !
The Past is peopled with our own dear Dead—
God grant our Future be thus comforted !

Night calls the exile home. Her constant stars
Console the wanderer in foreign lands—
Poor captive birds, that beat against their bars
With bleeding wings, are stilled when gentle hands
Make dark the cage, with merciful deceit—
To homesick hearts Night's shades are ever sweet.

Her moon will reach the darkest dungeon-bed—
She silvers many a weary captive's chains—
In garrets circles many an aching head,
That scarcely finds in sleep a rest from pains—
She plays with smiles upon the student's book,
The prayerful cheers with chaste and loving look

.

THE SILENCE OF NIGHT

THE hours pass on—and over Night's fair face
A change appears—another look is there ;
Her smile is gone, and sadness takes its place,
And poetry prepares to pass to prayer.
The Watchmen of the Night well know this change,
To them the midnight silence is not strange.

From furthest distance, over field and waste,
Through woods and parks, across the winding lake,
Past lawn and laurels, sweeps with noiseless haste
The Silence of the Night—prepared to take
Its hours of solemn watch, as if death's pall,
Instead of shadowy sleep, were over all.

Around and overhead, all dimly shown,
Between us and the distant house-dog's bark
It stands—a spectral presence, vast, unknown—
We tremble lest it touch us in the dark—
The rustle of Night's sable robe is heard,
And fear is felt, as if a ghost had stirr'd.

The forests now no darkling shadows fling,
Gloom grows and deepens like the swelling tides:
The drowsy beetle drops with half-closed wing,
And gropes to find the crevice where he hides.
None from their woodland lair or covert stir,
Save wings of down and feet of softest fur.

Yet, in the very heart of silence, life resounds—
The owl hoots long and loudly at his ease—
The dusky night-hawk whirls his rapid rounds
Beneath the drooping branches of the trees—
Half-dreaming cattle start up in the park,
And joust, and clash their white horns in the dark.

From silence and from darkness sounds receive
Weird dignity ; they seem like spirit-cries,
Or echoes from below from souls that heave
Their hopeless anguish to the forfeit skies.
Night's deathlike stillness strangely arms
The slightest sounds with mystical alarms.

On heart and mind, on all, Night's spell is cast—
Imagination wakens at her tread,
And memory walks the pathways of the past,
And hears the long-hushed voices of the dead.
Things long unheeded then come back again—
God grant, without a pang of bitter pain !

I well remember once, while in a boat,
There passed me, slowly gliding down the stream,
The nest of some poor bird, built on the moat,
From sedgy moorings loosened, it would seem—
Behind, the frightened mother tried to guide
Her flag-wove home towards the reedy side.

The treasures of that home were blithely borne
By that slight raft of rush above the tide :
Six pretty eggs—well might the mother mourn !—
Lay glowing in their whiteness side by side,
Still warm, for only now that faithful breast
Had left them, lest her weight should sink the nest.

Night's silence since hath swelled her plaining note :
'Tis now a wild, sad song which never ends.
Ever, like that light nest, it seems to float
O'er life's dull stream. Perchance 'tis this that blends
A love of what is little, feeble, young,
With every noblest aim the bards have sung.

Oh, were our torpid senses tutored well,
And prompt to yield obedience to the soul,
Our ears would hear the earth, like some huge bell,
In midnight silence ring responsive toll
To far-off bells in heaven. The stars we see
Are silver church-bells of eternity.

Night's Silence deepens mighty ocean's voice—
The cry with which his white waves leap and call.
The lakes and floods, the rivers that rejoice,
The woodland stream, the mountain waterfall,
E'en Siloe's waters, that "go silently,"
Receive from Night mysterious majesty.

Now moaning hoarsely over barren ground,
Now murmuring in pines they oft uproot,
The winds declare this truth in every sound
They bear to realms above. They are not mute.
Nay, God Himself hath said, "The stars praise Me,
The sons of God make joyful melody."

The darkness is Thy covert, Lord of all !
In silence is Thy one Divine Word said.
In darkness and in silence hear my call :
My heart is sad, and weary is my head,
With silent love, with firm faith's darkling truth,
Restore the long-lost joyfulfulness of youth !

"Nights wearisome," Thou knowest, Lord, I count—
Oft watering my couch with bitter tears,
And thy compassion knows the dismal fount
Whence flows the stream with anguish and with fears.
O! from the gloom of sin's despairing grief,
Thou "Hope of humankind," vouchsafe relief!

At midnight Thou didst leave the Father's breast,
"While all things rested in Night's solemn peace,"
To bring the sick and suffering health and rest,
To grant from shame and sorrow true release.
O sleepless God! "give to Thy loved ones sleep,"
And be it mine to watch, to pray, and weep!

Remember, Lord, how Mary wept and knelt,
That night when Thou didst sleep within the tomb—
The piercing pangs the Queen of Sorrows felt:
She mourned Thy death, Divine Fruit of her womb!
Yet, lifted up her hands with tears and moans,
And asked "the life of all her little ones."

For her sake come "in darkness of a cloud,"
And let my ears "by stealth" Thy word receive,
Or let Thy servant hear Thy voice aloud,
And falling prostrate say, "Lord, I believe."
Thus, thus shall Night illuminate my soul,
And bid me hope for Heaven's bright aureole.

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THE FEARS OF NIGHT

ENOUGH, enough ! let no one ask of me
To dwell upon Night's hours of mystic fear !
Their terrors still endure too vividly,
Too quickly do their phantoms re-appear.
Each heart best knows its secret and its grief,
Each heart well knows whence only comes relief.

The hour is thine, O Night ! when warnings come ;
The darkness thine, in which the spirit hides ;
The silence thine, in which the dreadful doom
Makes known to guilty souls what woe betides
The servant—be he slothful, harsh, or proud—
When gloom eternalwhelms him in its cloud.

Terrors, indeed, may rise from unblest graves :
The Lord Himself makes haste with light and aid.
Why should we fear ? He spoke upon the waves,
And sayeth still, " 'Tis I, be not afraid."
Night, holy Night ! thy Beauty, Silence, Fear,
Give peace, and make us feel that God is near.

Millions of men sleep tranquilly this night—
Millions that soon must sleep the sleep of death—
And in the Land Above, in glad delight—
Exceeding all the promises of Faith—
With wakeful hearts, Saints watch the Vision Blest,
In Light Perpetual, in Eternal Rest.

LIFE'S PILGRIMAGE

LIFE, weary life, speed on !
See how friends quit our slowly-moving band.
The best are onward gone ;
They left the long-held hand,
And started singly for the far-off land.

Remember how they went,
Departing from us when we least had thought.
Death beckoned—well content,
They passed away. They sought
God's will alone; save this, they cared for nought!

Mourn not, though they were young,
The sisters, brothers of thy childhood's life :
Mourn not, though prattling tongue
Had called thee mother. Wife,
Mourn not the husband saved from toil and strife.

Mourn not, ye little ones,
Her who made kind your father's care-worn face
Nor him, ye stately sons,
Who trained you for life's race—
All soon will reach their blissful resting-place.

Yes, grieve not for your loss,
Bear bravely this addition to your load :
'Tis but another cross,
Wherewith to climb the road ;
And *they* await you in the Blest Abode.

'Tis far from earth to heaven—
But heaven to earth is very, very near,
And countless helps are given
Throughout each weary year,
Till we, in turn, the welcome summons hear.

PART II

MARIANTHEA
A MAY CHAPLET
THE SEVEN DOLOURS

CORONULA B. MARIÆ VIRGINIS

FULCITE ME FLORIBUS

MAY is the month of flowers :
Bring them one by one,
Fresh with heaven's showers,
Fit for Mary's Son.
Take, Queen of May! the gifts we bring,
In crowning thee we crown our King.

May is the month of flowers :
For the Saviour's Head
Bring from fragrant bowers
Roses white and red.
We pierced with thorns that Sacred Brow,
Ah, let us offer garlands now !

May is the month of flowers :
Mother ! bless each wreath,
Bless these tranquil hours,
Bless the prayers we breathe !
O gentlest King ! vouchsafe to take
Our lowly flowers, for Mary's sake !

FOR THE DEFINITION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

To sing the hymns of heaven, how pure
The mind and heart must be !
On earth this only can secure
Concordant harmony
With those sweet sounds the Blessed raise
This day to Mary's love and praise.

Lord, send a Seraph from above
To cleanse our lips and heart ;
Admit us to this task of love,
Ah, let us bear a part !
Thy Mother's triumph is achieved,
All own her without sin conceived.

Then, Ave, Virgin pure ! In thee
No stain of sin is found :
Eve, Adam sinned, but thou art free,
While all is sin around—
The only one of Adam's race—
O wondrous Miracle of grace !

The only one ! Yes, all the rest
Were ruined by his Fall,
And lost that happiness so blest
Which God had planned for all—
The only one in whom we trace
No token of that dire disgrace.

God knew, O Mary Undeiled !
How much thou hadst to bear—
What torments with thy Suffering Child
Thou wouldst consent to share.
Could one whom sin had touched endure
What He shrank from who was Most Pure ?

Ah ! could the Holy One with sin
Be ever reconciled ?
Although He came our souls to win—
Souls wounded and defiled—
His pure Divinity could ne'er
Foul sin's contamination bear.

And so admiring Angels saw
This Miracle of grace—
One Maid exempted from the law
Imposed on Adam's race :
And she alone from sin was free
Of whom the Saviour born would be.

Thus had we learned, thus long believed,
Thus in the Fathers read.
The same is now of faith received,
By Holy Church decreed—
At length the Doctrine is defined,
Imposed on every heart and mind.

What Mary's clients long have held
Is now the faith of all :
None hesitate, none have rebell'd,
All join her children's call,
O Mary, without sin conceived,
By thee be all our wants relieved !

AVE MARIA

PRIMULA

HAIL, Mary ! through the Sacred Heart
Of Jesus, after whom thou art
Foreknown, and set aside
The Father's Daughter to be named
The Mother of the Son proclaimed,
The Holy Spirit's Bride.

Hail, lowly Handmaid of the Lord !
Hail, Virgin-Mother of the Word !
His everlasting choice—
His loved one, His Immaculate—
Our Mother, and our Advocate—
In whom we all rejoice !

The angels in the new-made light
Saw thee and Jesus ; at the sight
Some doubted, some adored—
Proud Satan and his bands were lost,
But Michael knew that Heaven's host
Through thee would be restored.

The ancient Fathers knew before,
And pondered, in the days of yore,
The promise of thy birth—
The thought of thee was like a stay
To prop them on their weary way
Across an unblessed earth.

The nations all expected thee ;
They longed for one to set them free,
And knew He was thy Son ;
The Prophets sang their Virgin Queen,
The Sibyls too had dimly seen
And hailed God's favoured One.

The noblest ancestry is thine,
The Patriarch, Royal, Priestly line
In thee sublimely end ;
When Joachim and Anna prayed,
Nor hoped for gift so long delayed,
His angel God did send.

He bade them be no longer sad ;
Like Sarah, Anna was made glad
With thee, her wondrous child—
She bore a child conceived in grace,
Saved from the ruin of our race,
Preserved all-undefiled.

Thy birth increased their mystic joy ;
For Anna's bliss had no alloy
Of fear or anxious pain—
And Mary was thy heavenly Name,
Whose sweetness all the Saints proclaim,
And none invoke in vain.

By God endowed with beauty rare,
With gifts of mind beyond compare,
Thou wert beloved of all.
Thy parents holily restored
Their little one unto the Lord,
In answer to His call.

Within the Temple thou didst dwell,
Child-Angel in thy sacred cell,
Absorbed in love and prayer—
The loveliest in innocence,
The brightest in intelligence—
The Marvel of all there.

The First to make the virgin's vow
Its glory shone upon thy brow
In rays of heavenly light.
Thy purity made others long
For holiness which knows not wrong ;
Sin fled before thy sight.

In chanting prophecy and psalm,
In contemplation's blissful calm,
For three things thou hast prayed—
To do God's blessed will on earth,
Hers who would give Messiah birth,
And be her lowliest maid.

Hail, Mary ! by God's providence,
The Just Man Joseph's innocence
And virgin-marriage tie
Gave shelter in thy husband's name
At Nazareth, when Gabriel came
Upon God's embassy.

He told the Father's high behest,
He brought the Son's divine request,
Announced the Dove's descent—
"Behold the handmaid of the Lord,
Be all according to thy word,"
Was thy devout consent.

In thee, O virgin Paradise,
Our heavenly Adam did arise,
 The Woman's Promised Seed—
The Word took flesh within thy womb,
There God our nature did assume,
 As was of old decreed.

Enthroned within thy bosom chaste,
Thy Babe was borne with reverent haste
 Unto Judea's hills ;
The Spirit filled Elizabeth,
She blessed the greatness of thy faith,
 Moved by her infant's thrills.

In Sion thou didst never raise
A psalm of David, hymn of praise,
 So sweet as thine own song ;
And yet, thy silence was more sweet,
When awed Saint Joseph would retreat,
 But feared to do thee wrong.

How blissfully the nine months sped !
What joy in gesture, look, and tread,
 In this ecstatic life !
Till Joseph with his tribe was told
To be at Bethlehem enrolled,
 With thee his maiden-wife.

Within the inn there was no room,
So, in a wayside stable's gloom,
 In cold neglect and scorn—
The only shelter overhead
A hut where cattle housed and fed—
 Thy Infant God was born.

Alas ! to Bethlehem's disgrace,
A manger was the only place
 To lay thy little Dove !
Ah, Mary, thou didst first adore,
And then in ravishment outpour
 A joyful mother's love.

The swaddling clothes, with love grown bold,
Around Him thou dost gently fold,
 And hush His plaining cries ;
When to thy bosom thou didst press
Thy Babe's sweet lips with fond caress,
 The Cave was Paradise.

The Shepherds hasten'd from their flocks,
And found between the ass and ox
 The new-born Saviour laid.
Rejoicingly did they depart,
But thou didst keep within thy heart
 The wonders that they said.

Thy pitying tears flowed unrestrained,
To see the tender Infant pained
 By circumcision rites.
Next came the star-led Eastern Kings,
Who, making mystic offerings,
 Adored the Light of Lights.

There thou for forty days didst stay,
Concealed in order to obey
 A law not made for thee.
Then to the Temple thou didst take
The Lord, for holy Simeon's sake,
 Who pined to be set free.

He holds within his trembling arms
Thy Little One, whose beauty warms
 The holy old man's heart.
Such happiness is not for long,
Sad prophecy succeeds his song,
 He speaks of sorrow's smart.

In silence thou didst hear his word,
And make thine offering to the Lord ;
 All things were rightly done—
The fledglings of a dove for thee,
The legal price to set Him free—
 Again He was thine own.

Saint Joseph, in the dead of night,
Was warned by angels to take flight,
 In Egypt to abide.
The trackless desert hid your way,
And baulk'd the tyrant of his prey,
 Though Rachel mourned and sigh'd.

In exile seven years go by :
When those who sought the Child's life die,
 The Angel speaks again ;
Saint Joseph brings the Child and thee
To Nazareth of Galilee—
 There safely ye remain.

PASSIFLORA

Hail, Mary ! plunged in sorrow's sea,
When Jesus left you secretly
 By blameless stratagem—
Afflicted Parents ! grieved and pained,
Not knowing why the Child remained
 Within Jerusalem.

Upon the third day He was found
With wondering doctors all around,
 Amazed at His replies ;
When thou didst use a parent's right
To question why He left your sight,
 His words caused fresh surprise.

He said : " Why did ye seek Me out,
And knew not I must be about
 My Father's business ?"—Still,
He went with you to Nazareth,
And, dwelling there till Joseph's death,
 Was subject to your will.

Again, at Cana, when He broke
Those years of silence, words were spoke
 In public unto thee,
Which seemed to warn thee not to press
Thy Mother-rights, though none the less
 Obedient was He.

Thy watchful eye had seen the need,
Thy gentle heart was quick to read
 The trouble, and the fear
Of those who bade ye to their feast,
When all their stock of wine decreased,
 And shame seemed drawing near.

When thou didst plead, " They have no wine !"
He seemed abruptly to decline
 To grant thy kind request ;
Yet worked His first great miracle,
And changed the water from the well
 To wine, at thy behest.

Thou, too, didst journey to and fro,
And hear His words of wisdom flow
 To teach the multitude ;
His virtues thou didst imitate,
And wert His meek associate
 In all His doing good.

The Magdalen was brought to thee,
From thy protecting company
 She was not bid depart ;
She found a shelter in thy name,
Found honour in the place of shame,
 A new home in thy heart.

And when thine own sweet name was heard
Applied to others. Still, no word
 Of thine expressed dissent :
He called His Mother everyone
By whom His Father's will was done—
 Thou, Mother, wert content !

Hail, Mary ! most compassionate,
When men repaid with scorn and hate
 The goodness of thy Son—
Their envy, persecution, spite,
Made Him withdraw in unseen flight,
 Rejected by His own.

At last drew nigh the woeful hour,
When Jesus used no more such power,
 But left their malice free.
He bent to John in Jordan's flood—
Before His Baptism of Blood,
 He came and knelt to thee.

Thou didst not grieve with sad lament
That tender Son, thou didst consent
 To say thy *Fiat* twice !
Yet who can tell the sea of woe
That filled thy heart to see Him go
 To make His Sacrifice ?

He, full of pity, filial grief
For thy great anguish, gave relief
 Before He would depart ;
O miracle ! became thy Food,
Gave back to thee His Flesh and Blood,
 Again lived in thy heart.

In spirit, with Him thou didst share
The Agony, the prostrate prayer,
 See Judas reach his prey,
Behold the traitor take thy place,
And dare to kiss the holy Face
 Which was not turned away.

Then didst thou see the gentle Hands
Of Jesus bound in cruel bands,
 When leaving Him all fled.
Thy voiceless spirit's plaintive cry
Pursued that ruthless company
 By which thy Lamb was led.

To Annas first, to Caiphas next
They dragged Him with unjust pretext,
 And judged thy guiltless Child.
They smote His Face, His Beard they tore,
They spat—no face was e'er before
 So horribly defiled !

They left Him in that piteous plight,
And thou didst mourn throughout the night,
 Until the dreaded morn.
To Pilate then they took their prey,
Thou didst behold Him led away
 With blasphemy and scorn.

Sent forth by Pilate's doom to die
The culprit's death on Calvary,
 He passed before thine eyes.
Men saw the Son and Mother meet,
While pitying women throng'd the street
 And rent the air with cries.

Thy Jesus, weeping Mother ! bent
Beneath His Cross, before thee went
 Along the mournful road ;
And all the way, the Victim bled
From scourged Flesh and tortured Head ;
 Thy tears in torrents flowed.

He reached at last Mount Calvary's crown,
He gently laid His burden down,
 The Altar of His love—
And then sank down at their commands,
Held wide His gentle, weary Hands,
 That love the more to prove.

The heavy hammer's sickening stroke,
A sound of flesh and iron broke
 The stillness deep as death.
Then, mangled Hands and Feet upbear
His bleeding **Body** in the air—
 Thou standest underneath !

Thou standest motionless below,
Erect, entranced, transfixed with woe
 Past words, beyond belief;
Thy soul was drenched with bitterness
Yet, ne'er did mother so express
 The majesty of grief.

Thy First-born He, thine only One,
No mother had so fair a son,
 The fruit of virgin womb;
The love which gave thy sorrow birth
Was more than any love of earth,
 No love could so consume.

Thy soul with love and sorrow burned,
Thy heart with gentlest pity yearned,
 With His thy courage vied;
In sympathy most exquisite,
Thy soul unto His soul was knit—
 Thou, too, wast crucified!

To see thee mourn was His worst grief—
To have no solace, no relief
 For anguish so intense;
By this His tender filial thought
To woe thy Harp of Joy was brought—
 Woe, like thine own, immense.

By thee the Eternal Father showed
His pity; from thy sad eyes flowed
 The tears He bade thee weep.
No angel came to comfort thee,
But in thy soul more piercingly
 The two-edged sword sank deep.

That sword the Son, thy loving Son,
By bidding thee adopt Saint John,
Drove deeper in thy heart.
In deepest cloud the Spirit came,
And gave another dearest name
To suit this mournful part.

Named Queen of Sorrows, second Eve,
He bade thee lift thy hands, and grieve
For all thy little ones.
Made children of The Desolate,
We fear no more the hopeless fate
Of Eva's exiled sons.

This led thee, Mother, to contrast
Thy First and Fairest with thy last—
His beauty, innocence,
His gentleness, His tender ways,
His youth, the sweetness of His gaze,
His love of thee intense !

And then, His pains are thine own price,
Thy gifts are bought by sacrifice—
For thee those Blood-drops fall ;
All others are from guilt reprieved,
Immaculate thou wast conceived,
Yet His Blood pays for all.

Thou standest here, almost alone,
Save John, the Apostles all are gone—
Thou grieveest for their flight ;
But still more doth thy kind heart ache
To see God's people thus forsake
Their Glory and their Light.

Not they alone ! Of all mankind
Too few are those who safety find
In Him who dies for all.
" O earth, earth, earth, hide not My Blood,
Make some return of gratitude "—
Is His appealing call.

Vile blasphemies offend His ears ;
At last the poor Thief interferes,
And makes his contrite prayer ;
And thou dost see the light of grace
Illuminate that wistful face,
Instead of dark despair.

The gall is tasted—all is done—
The three Death-hours at last are gone—
He ends His Sacrifice.
For sinful man one more loud cry—
For thee His dying Heart's last sigh—
He bends His Head, and dies. . . .

Hail ! Victim of barbarity !
Most ruthlessly compelled to see
Thy lifeless God profaned !
Thy love was there to feel the smart,
When soldiers pierced that Sacred Heart,
And all its Treasure drained.

Then timid Nicodemus came
With Joseph, from the tree of shame
To take their Master down.
Once more thou didst thy Jesus hold—
Thy bosom knows how still and cold
He lay there in His crown !

By Him thy broken heart was calmed,
While faltering, loving hands embalmed
And wrapped Him in the shroud.
With haste and fear, in evening's gloom,
They laid Him in the rock-hewn tomb,
Delay was not allowed.

Forbade to stay and mourn thy loss,
Thou couldst but press upon the Cross
Thy lips with gentle moan ;
And He was left to rest and sleep,
And thou didst go to watch and weep,
All desolate, alone ! . . .

GLORIOSA

Hail, Mary ! gladdened with the sight
Of Jesus Risen, fair and bright,
Made happy with His voice.
How tenderly He comforts thee,
How sweetly lauds thy constancy ;
O Queen of Heaven, rejoice !

The Forty Days too swiftly sped—
To Olivet thy Jesus led
His little flock—and there,
He rose, He passed the olives tall,
With lifted Hands He blessed them all,
And left them to thy care.

The Holy Spirit, when He came
With parted tongues of golden flame,
With thee found everyone.
What gifts, what messages of love
Were brought thee by the Heavenly Dove,
From thine Ascended Son !

Hail, faithful Handmaid of the Lord !
Consenting to His parting word,
 Fulfilling His last will.
Twelve years this second Motherhood
Thy longing wistfulness withstood,
 And kept thee with us still.

O Virgin of all virgins ! thou
Dost make the prayer, the ardent vow,
 To aid the ministry.
If Peter preach, if Paul dispute,
Thy silent prayers procure the fruit—
 On thee they all rely.

How calm and sweet was thy content,
When Gabriel, for the last time sent,
 Brought greetings from on high—
Transported from each distant land,
The Apostles kissed thy queenly hand,
 Allowed to see thee die.

He comes, He comes, thy Absent One—
Thy loving God, thy loving Son,
 Thy soul darts to His Breast !
He draws thee closer to His Heart—
No more shall Son and Mother part—
 He bears thee to thy rest !

In light of glory, floods of bliss,
The Godhead's infinite Abyss
 Now face to face is seen ;
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Present thee to the angelic host,
 And crown thee Heaven's Queen.

Thy Son hath one more blissful task,
Which love and honour justly ask
For her who gave Him birth—
He bids thy Body also rise,
And so transplants to Paradise
The Lily of the earth.

Hail, Mary ! Queen enthroned on high,
Thy crown befits thy dignity,
Great Mother of our God !
Upon thy Heart the angels look,
That sinless Heart, from whence He took
His Body and His Blood.

Yet, not like orphans are we left,
Of thy sweet tenderness bereft ;
Thou art our Mother still,
Our Advocate, our Refuge, Friend,
Life, Hope, and Sweetness, who dost send
A balm for every ill.

O Mother ! who hast prayed and wept
For me, thy worthless son, accept
This Ave—e'en from me.
Fain would I hail thee with each breath,
Until the moment of my death,
And for Eternity !

FLOS CARMELI

CARMEL's fair Flower !
Rod blossom-laden
Smile on thy Dower,
Meek Mother-Maiden !
None equals thee.

Grant us a sign
Thou dost protect us,
Mark us for thine ;
Shine, and direct us,
Star of the Sea !

(The prayer of St. Simon Stock, answered with
the privilege of the Scapular.)

TO OUR BLESSED LADY

BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION

THROUGHOUT the land of light,
The blessed clad in white
Thy presence, Mary! with the angels seek :
Yet hear a sinner's prayer,
O help me to prepare
My soul for Him who heals the sick and weak—
I call the Queen of Heaven to earth,
The Mother cannot scorn her Jesu's place of birth.

Unclean of heart and hands,
In spite of His commands
I dare not eat and drink His Flesh and Blood.
My sinfulness is such
I dare not even touch
His garment's hem, yet hunger for that Food :
I ought to weep and hold aloof,
How dare I entertain the Lord beneath my roof?

His wounds in hands and feet
The Father's face entreat—
Those roseate wounds the Father's wrath appease :
Show thou the bosom blest
That nursed and gave Him rest—
No need for thee to ask on bended knees,
Thy lightest wish prevails like prayer,
And Jesus at one look the guiltiest will spare.

Thou dost not ask in vain;
Sweet Advocate, obtain
 The grace and mercy I so greatly need.
O Mary ! as through thee
He came on earth to me
 By thee, my Mother, I to Him would plead—
Nay, lend to me thine own pure heart
For fear He find no fruit, and curse me and depart.

Thy faith and hope and love
Once drew Him from above,
 Descending lightly as the dewy cloud—
Thou fair and spotless one,
For me unclean atone—
 Thou lowly one, win pity for the proud.
I strike my breast, I hide my head,
And think a mother's tears made Jesus raise the dead.

And if I stay away,
What shall I say that day
 When He will judge the living and the dead ?
O Blessed Sacrament !
My soul's sweet nourishment,
 True life to all who eat Thee, Living Bread !
Unfit to die, unfit to live,
I come to Thee, dear Lord ! for Mary's sake forgive !

TO OUR BLESSED LADY

AFTER HOLY COMMUNION

O MARY ! Virgin blest,
Sweet Mother of my Guest,
Give thanks for me to Jesus, God and Lord :
O bid thine angels raise
New canticles of praise—
By heaven and earth be Christ thy Son adored :
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost
Be benediction given, and to the Sacred Host.

Descend, great Queen, descend,
Creation's Empress, bend
Beside earth's vilest to creation's King ;
Yes, Mother undefiled,
Assist thy poorest child
To worship Jesus, teach me how to sing
Magnificat like thine—But no !
My undersong of praise be tears and weepings low.

For all that He has done
In thee and everyone,
For all His love and patience give Him praise ;
Compared to thy blest womb
My heart is but a tomb,
Yet in this heart contentedly He stays—
My heart should feel what thine has felt,
And at His lightest touch in tenderness should melt.

Alas, 'tis hard and cold !
Upon thy heart of gold,
Thy golden glowing heart of burning love,
There—while He is mine own—
I lay thy white Lamb down—
He has no brighter altar-throne above ;
There, in the shrine of purity
And lilies silver-white the spotless Lamb shall lie.

His Father dwells in light,
I cannot reach that height,
With mortal eye I may not look and live—
Yet Christ in highest bliss
Accepts His Mother's kiss—
Best thanks a son can take, a mother give—
Then, clasp Him to thy tender breast,
His gentle mercy-seat, His sweetest place of rest.

Behold the Infinite
With nothingness unite !
O Mary, who can measure love divine ?
O full of grace ! now fill
Mind, memory, and will
With light, and gratitude, and love like thine :
So may my heart, like thy pure heart,
Keep blessedly the Word, although the Word depart.

THE MONTH OF MARY ALTAR

BEAUTIFUL Mother, we deck thy shrine ;
All that is brightest and best of ours
Found in our gardens we reckon thine :
God thought of thee when He made the flowers !

Beautiful Mother, upon thy shrine,
Picked and gathered in loving haste,
Fragrant and fresh shows our blended line—
They who love thee will not want for taste.

Beautiful Mother, around thy shrine
Innocent children, lights, flowers should be—
Winning a smile from the Child Divine,
Pleased with us most when we pleasure thee.

Beautiful Mother, before thy shrine
How can I venture to kneel and speak ?
What that is bright do I bring of mine ?
Only the tear on a sinner's cheek.

A MAY CHAPLET

FOR THE EVE

CROWN HER WITH FAIR FLOWERS

*The flowers have appeared in our land, the time for pruning is come :
the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.—CANT. ii. 12.*

THE Spring is come : her plaintive doves
Coo softly in our wooded dales,
And songs of unseen nightingales
Proclaim the budding of the groves—
While Spring decks copse and prairie,
Spreads verdure over bowers,
Praise we most holy Mary,
And crown her with fair flowers.

And yet earth's fairest flowers must prove,
Like the frail fancies of our mind,
Too poor to be in wreaths entwined
To crown the Mother of fair love.
They strew the sanctuary,
Fast fading with the hours,
Yet praise most holy Mary,
And crown her with fair flowers.

She is herself our gracious Spring—
She comes, the wintry frost departs—
She breathes, and lo ! our icy hearts
Dissolve in love and sorrowing.
Of worship be not chary,
Sing loud with new-born powers :
Praise, praise most holy Mary,
And crown her with fair flowers

Dark winter to the north makes wing,
The Lord is Mary's sun and light,
And even here, for her delight,
Begins the Everlasting Spring.
Sweet scents, that ever vary,
Revive these souls of ours
To praise most holy Mary,
And crown her with fair flowers.

By her set free, the captive heart
Can love, adore, and bless Thee, Lord
Thrilled like a living harpsichord,
It sings how dear and good Thou art.
Breathe, soft winds of the prairie,
Fall, fall, ye gentle showers,
While we praise holy Mary,
And crown her with fair flowers.

To Mary let us consecrate
Hymns worthy of devotion's choice,
Let triumph ring in every voice,
And cheer us on to Heaven's Gate.
Within the Sanctuary
In Sion's golden towers,
God grant we may praise Mary,
And crown her with fair flowers !

I

MYSTICAL PEARL

The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. ST. MATT. xiii. 45-46.

This pearl is also the Blessed Virgin Mary.

CORNELIUS A LAPIDE.

HAIL ! Pearl of precious worth,
To thee none may compare,
Grace filled thee ere thy birth,
Grace singular and rare,
Fair Pearl ! all heaven and earth
Thy pricelessness declare.

What purpose should mine be,
Throughout life's pilgrimage,
Except to seek for thee,
Most noble heritage ?
To win thee worthily,
I would my all engage.

Where art thou to be sought—
In heaven, or here below ?
Should love's bright lamp be brought
In search of thee to go—
Or, will a prayerful thought
Discern thy gentle glow ?

O, had I to resign
A sceptre and a crown
How soon, to call thee mine,
Sweet Pearl ! I'd lay them down,
To see thee softly shine,
And know thou wert mine own !

Where, then, shall I prepare
Thy chosen place of rest ?
May heart like my heart dare
To claim thee for its guest—
There laid, like snow-flake fair
On some red rose's breast ?

Upon my brow, how clear
The softness of thy light !
What music for mine ear,
If there, throughout the night
Thou whisper : Love is near,
Rest safely in His sight !

O, deem me not too bold,
Be love's betrothal ring !
My hand were blest to hold,
Mid toil, so fair a thing,
Within its bed of gold
For ever slumbering !

Dear Talisman ! through thee,
Though armies stand arrayed,
I gain the victory,
Secure celestial aid,
And claim His clemency,
Who loves the Pearl He made:

II

THE CRADLE OF MARY

Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising? CANT. vi. 9.

My soul, behold this wondrous sight—
Angelic multitudes descend,
And, lustrous with refulgent light,
O'er one sweet cradled Infant bend.

Here sleeps God's purest, chosen Pearl,
Hid, as in alabaster cave,
Here beauties doth His Rose unfurl,
While round her sheltering lilies wave.

This cradle—'tis morn's azure sky,
Here riseth Jacob's promised Star,
Which tells that Light divine draws nigh
To shine on nations from afar.

Let all creation gladly pay
Meet homage to the Morning Star,
That warns the gloomy night away,
And guides the Sun's resplendent car.

White-shadowed, Jordan's spotless dove
Doth o'er the crystal waters glide—
Descending on like wings of love,
The Spirit hovers o'er His Bride.

The Father watches from on high
A Daughter in this little child,
The Word, with filial piety,
Reveres a Mother undefiled.

Your infants, Christian matrons, bring,
'Mid Mary's angels let them play ;
Come, virgins, in life's opening spring
Let innocence its worship pay.

We sinners, too, will venture in—
With heavy heart, yet noiseless tread—
And silently bewail our sin,
Around this spotless cradle-bed.

III

AWAKE !

Arise, make haste, my love, my dove. CANT. ii. 10.

THE day is passed away, the stars of night
Steal forth, their timid watch to keep,
The Maiden rests in God's protecting sight—
O dearest Child, sleep, sweetly sleep !

A transport hushed her song ; but o'er her soul
Ecstatic waves of love still sweep,
Her brow still beams with love's bright aureole,—
O gentle Child, sleep, sweetly sleep !

Most tranquilly she breathes, her features wear
The look of rest—yet Anne may creep
And catch the music of a murmured prayer—
O holy Child, sleep, sweetly sleep !

Her very dreams in science far excel
The wisest cherub's knowledge deep ;
Far, far above the power of man to tell—
O purest Child, sleep, sweetly sleep !

Alas ! my life is but a guilty dream,
For which I ought to blush and weep—
Above me hangs remorse with sword-like gleam—
O sinless Child, no longer sleep !

O rescue me when wandering near the brink
Of danger and sin's fatal leap
Into the dark abyss where lost souls sink—
O wisest Child, no longer sleep !

O pray that never sleep of God unblest
The senses of my soul may steep—
Pray that my heart be watchful while I rest—
O holy Child, no longer sleep !

One night must come—then Mother ! be thou near—
When death shall bring his slumber deep,
O whisper softly in my dying ear :
“ My own poor child, sleep, sweetly sleep ! ”

IV

HAD I BUT SEEN HER!

I purposed, therefore, to take her to me to live with me : knowing that she will communicate to me of her good things, and will be a comfort in my cares and griefs. WISDOM viii. 9.

WOULD it had been my lot to contemplate

The Dawn which banished darkness from the earth,

The Star, whose shining did illuminate

God's highest angels with fresh joy and mirth.

“Child, thou canst reach the Mystic Rose

That thou wouldst see ;

In heaven it grows,

But offers fairest flowers to thee.”

Oh, could I but have seen that infancy—

Those ecstasies her parents oft beheld !

O what a heaven for them, each day to see

New grace and beauty, which new love compelled.

“Cease, Child of Mary, to repine,

Thy grief control !

Her gifts are thine—

Each day adorn with them thy soul.”

O Sion's Temple ! would that I had dwelt

Within the precincts of thy sacred wall

When she, God's Ark, arrived—the Babe who felt,

From the first years, the Everlasting's call !

“Her Heart, Child, is God's Temple now,

There all find grace,

And never vow

Was uttered in a holier place.”

Oh, had my heart but been the harpsichord
To which she sang with more than angel skill !
It would have broken at each thrilling word,
Or, filled with melody, would vibrate still.
 "Child, when thy soul on wing of dove
 To heaven has flown,
 She, Harp of Love,
Will aid its Sanctus at the Throne."

Oh, had I only seen her in the Cave,
 Been trusted with the Child—received one kiss—
Received but one of those sweet looks they gave,
 My heart and breast would burn with speechless bliss !
 "O Child, God is a God of fire !
 His Mother will
 To love's desire
Accede,—and give thee Jesus still."

Had I but waited in the Upper Room
 With Mary, in the days of Pentecost—
Ah ! there, at Mary's feet would be my home,
 The Tabernacle of the Holy Ghost.
 "Is not the Church of Christ become
 His Mother's care,
 His Mother's home ?
 Child, thou art with her everywhere !"

But to have missed her last words, and her smile
 The day her soul departed to her Love ;
When death was sent to guard the couch awhile,
 Till That which slept was also called above !
 "Child, wait—a little longer wait !
 'Tis but a night—
 They'll pass thy gate,
And take thee to the land of light."

V

HER HYMNS

Mary, the prophetess, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went forth after her with timbrels and with dances ; and she began this song unto them, saying: Let us sing to the Lord, for he is gloriously magnified. EX. xv. 20.

AT eve the little Virgin's hand
Awoke the music of her lyre,
Her song was heard in heaven's land,
Her chanting hushed the angels' choir.
The Temple's echoes hung around,
And trembled like the spell-bound air,
Oh, never voice had sweeter sound,
Heart never breathed a purer prayer.

Alas ! that matchless melody,
Excelling heaven's most lofty strain—
Those hymns of plaintive prophecy
On earth may not be heard again ;
What echo could repeat her song ?
What virgin saint could sing her hymn ?
What angel of those countless throngs,
What sanctus-chanting seraphim ?

For us the memory alone
Is left of her enchanting notes :
Around the Benediction throne
A fragrant scent of incense floats ;
The slender column lightly rose,
And vanished in the lofty dome ;
The perfume lingers, and it shows
Our Saviour's sacramental home.

O Queen of Virgins ! what must be
The hymns which thou art singing now ?
The angels have no harmony
So rapturous yet soft and low.
The seraphs find them strangely sweet—
These transports of thy human love—
And worthy to give praises meet
To Father, Word, and Heavenly Dove.

The syren world, with artful skill,
Its votaries may captivate,—
And pleasant is the secret thrill
Which waves or forest winds create ;
But art and nature must be mute,
When Mary, Queen of heavenly choirs,
Within the Temple strikes her lute,
And sings the hymns which God inspires.

May that sweet voice direct and guide
Through life my spirit's tranquil course !
That music charm it—make it glide
In peace unto the heavenly source !
In undersong may I repeat,
With humble love, the sacred hymn,
And finish, at the Saviour's Feet,
This blissful task of praising Him.

VI

THE GOD OF MARY

*Whithersoever thou shalt go, I will go ; and where thou shalt dwell,
I also will dwell. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.*
RUTH i. 16.

O GOD of Mary, Thine own Hands
Which made her also fashioned me ;
And if her gifts, received from Thee,
Allured Thee to these desert lands—
O Mary's God,
Art Thou not mine ?
My Love Divine !
My heart's Abode !

Art Thou less mighty, or less great
In what Thou hast performed for me,
Or am I less Thy work than she ?
Thou lovest all Thou dost create.
O Mary's God !
Art Thou not mine ?
My Love Divine !
My heart's Abode !

One Beauty do not all behold?
One Wisdom do not all explore?
One Goodness do not all adore?
Does not one Love all souls infold?
O Mary's God!
Art Thou not mine?
My Love Divine!
My heart's Abode!

Though less by me has been received,
Though sick and weary be my head—
To me "I pardon thee" is said,
And Thou more sufferings hast relieved.
O Mary's God!
Art Thou not mine?
My Love Divine!
My heart's Abode!

Nay, measureless in Charity,
Thou didst at last give even her!
Divine contrivance! to confer
The fulness of her grace on me.
O Mary's God!
Art Thou not mine?
My Love Divine!
My heart's Abode!

Compared to hers our gifts seem small,
But her gifts were the gracious sign
And promise of that Love Divine
Which gives Itself entire to all.
O Mary's God!
Art Thou not mine?
My Love Divine!
My heart's Abode!

Yes, in the Eucharistic Feast,
Thy greatest grace!—the Living Bread,
With which her happy soul was fed,
Refreshes me, who am the least.

O Mary's God!
Art Thou not mine?
My Love Divine!
My heart's Abode.

When exile ends, when toil is o'er,
I look to share with her above
The streams of light, of life and love,
The sight of Thee for evermore,

O Mary's God!
Art Thou not mine?
My Love Divine!
My heart's Abode!

VII

MARY A REVELATION OF GOD

She is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness. WIS. vii. 26.

DID I hear the angels singing
In the star-land wilderness,
Did I hear the heavens ringing
With God's praise—I should learn less
Of His Majesty and Splendour,
Than I learn from Mary's Heart,
With its vast love, strong and tender—
O my God, how great Thou art.

At His tread, the lofty mountain
Trembles ; but all motionless,
Clear and still, this crystal fountain
Mirrors all His Loveliness.
Quiet as the sea at even,
When the sun sinks down to rest,
Mary's soul shines soft as heaven,
When God hides in her pure breast.

Full of thorns and demon-haunted,
Long lay earth a desert waste,
Until Jesse's Rod was planted,
Mary, chastest of the chaste—
To her, by the Spirit wafted,
Came the Flower of Paradise—
Rod, like Blossom, pure, though grafted
On a stock that sins and dies.

When we see Our Lady kneeling
In a trembling, humble prayer,
To God's clemency appealing
To be merciful and spare—
Angels with their thrice sung "Holy"
Of His justice tell us less
Than does Mary, suppliant, lowly,
Worshipping His Holiness.

Sweet art Thou, O God of Mary,
"Taste and see," is Thy sweet call
In Thy heavenly Sanctuary,
All to her, and All to all—
Like her, loving as a mother—
Having all loves in Thy Heart—
Love of Father, Spouse, and Brother,
O my God ! how sweet Thou art.

VIII

THE AVOWAL OF ST. BERNARDINE
OF SIENA¹

Her have I loved, and have sought her out from my youth, and have desired to take her for my spouse, and I became a lover of her beauty.
WIS. viii. 2.

My heart is not mine any longer,
I confess it to you, dearest friends ;
I love, and no love could be stronger,
For my Loved One the whole world transcends—
My heart is not mine any longer.

'Tis useless to dwell on her beauty,
She has utterly conquer'd my heart—
To praise her I feel is my duty,
But her fairness excels all my art—
'Tis useless to dwell on her beauty.

I cannot endure life without her,
Nor the length of the night and the day—
'Tis life to be thinking about her,
So I love her, and live in that way—
I cannot endure life without her !

¹ The holy youth used to separate from his comrades to go and pray before a wayside picture of the Madonna. Hence their raillery, and the poetical playfulness with which he first parried and then satisfied their curiosity.

I study, but study to find her,
To this end all my powers are trained ;
My hope is that she will be kinder,
My mind and my will are enchained—
I study, but study to find her !

For her, then, my whole soul is yearning—
After God, she has won all my love :
'Tis a bright and pure flame ever burning,
'Tis a true vow recorded above—
For her, then, my whole soul is yearning !

So now, need I name this fair Maiden,
Need I say, it is MARY I mean ?
My bosom at last is unladen—
Heaven's Queen was my heart's only queen !
So now, need I name this fair Maiden ?

IX

AVE MARIA

Mary was troubled at this saying, and thought within herself what manner of salutation this should be. ST. LUKE i. 29.

LIKE sunbeam on its cheerful road,
Which lights the clouds with golden smile,
An echo fills earth's dark abode,
Joy gladdens every gloomy aisle—
The universe has learned to say
St. Gabriel's greeting day by day—
Ave Maria,
Gratia plena !

O sacred words ! his message charms
The Seraph of Eternal Love ;
He calms the innocent alarms
Of Israel's fluttered, timid dove—
The lowly Handmaid of the Lord
Becomes the Mother of the Word.
Ave Maria,
Gratia plena !

Sweet words of love ! in heaven first sung
Upon the glad Assumption day,
The angels' welcome, as they hung
Above their Queen's triumphal way—
Words more harmonious could not be
In their immortal symphony.

Ave Maria,
Gratia plena !

The Holy Spirit aided them,
More joyful song they never made,
Her Jesus held a diadem
With flashing jewels all inlaid—
He crowned His Mother : happy Son !
And led her to the Father's throne.

Ave Maria,
Gratia plena !

The Ave is the prayer of all,—
Of virgin, with her shining lamp,
When summoned by the Bridegroom's call,—
The watchword of the Christian camp,—
The praise of lisping infancy,
The hymn of all who hope in thee—

Ave Maria,
Gratia plena !

And thus, may I my voice employ,
O Queen ! O Mother of Fair Love !
O may it be my greatest joy
To join the angels' song above,
And send one murmuring wavelet more
To praise thee on the eternal shore !

Ave Maria,
Gratia plena !

X

CHRISTMAS AND COMMUNION

They found Joseph and Mary, and the Infant lying in a manger.
LUKE ii. 16.

JESUS is in my heart—Archangels, as of old
Ye knelt at Bethlehem, now adore in circling throng !
In helpless want, in bitter cold,
He waits your worship and your song.

Against a frozen world's neglect and scornful slight,
How poor the shelter of a cheerless heart like mine !
How sullen and how black the night
Which frowns on Thee, O Guest Divine !

Mary ! too humble to disdain the lowly cave,
For thy Son's sake do not a wretched heart despise ;
Compassionate thy suppliant slave,
And make a stable Paradise.

O lend me thine own heart, thy heart with flames and light—
The roadside shed will seem His Mother's home !
Thy soul to mine for His dear sake unite,
And let me say, Come, Jesus, come !

XI

THE HEAVENLY SAMARITAN

A certain man fell among robbers, who also stripped him, and having wounded him, went away leaving him half dead. But a certain Samaritan being on his journey, came near him, and seeing him was moved to compassion: and going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. LUKE x. 30.

My careless soul in search of pleasures,
From flower to flower unheeding strayed;
Her foes prepared their crafty measures—
She fell into the ambushade.
Of treasure they bereft her,
And well-nigh dead they left her,
Poor wretch! too weak to call for aid.

In deadly swoon behold her lying,
Laid low in this most piteous plight,
Those heavy eyelids, vainly trying
To bear the excruciating light.
One livid wound all over,
With scarce a rag to cover
Her hurts, and hide the sickening sight.

But, eyes of mercy soon discovered
The spot where I was roughly tost,
And over me Our Lady hovered,
Else I for ever had been lost.
Yes ! had she not been near me,
Had she delayed to hear me,
Salvation would have been the cost.

O gentle hands, so full of healing !
O sweetest eyes ! There comes a calm,
And o'er me, Mother, sleep is stealing,
Like shadows falling from a palm—
Thy tears sooth all our sadness,
Thy dear voice brings back gladness—
Of broken hearts thou art the balm !

O dear Samaritan ! descending
From heavenly lands, thou bringest me
The new wine of the life unending,
The healing oil of charity—
The wine that doth refresh us
Is Blood divine and precious,
Which Jesus shed on Calvary.

Bathe, bathe my soul, O heavenly Stranger,
With that redeeming, sacred Wine !
It saves us in the hour of danger,
It is our remedy divine—
It cleanseth our offences,
'Tis fragrance to our senses,
O pour it on this heart of mine !

XII

THE DREAM OF ST. KATHERINE

I will espouse thee to me in justice and judgment, and in mercy, and in commiseration. OSEE ii. 19.

O FAIREST Mother, ever young !
Whose Son the ages make not old,—
O listen to my faltering tongue,
And let me thy sweet Jesus hold !
Ah ! let me taste the rapturous bliss
Which made thy gentle bosom glow,—
And cover, with caressing kiss,
His feet, His hands, His sacred brow.

Alas ! He shudders at my sight—
How stern and menacing His eyes !
They dart forth rays of searching light,
Which show my soul her miseries ;
She learns that she is Satan's prey—
That unclean spirits in her dwell—
Who crouch, and lurk, and fiercely bay
For carnage, savage hounds of hell.

O Holy Child, reject me not !
To whom, Lord, can I go but Thee !
Thine eyes behold each sinful blot,
And yet Thine arms must shelter me !
O flow, baptismal waters, flow !
Repentance shall my sorrow prove—
O take the sin-stain from my brow,
And make me worthy of His love !

O Lord, than thought itself more swift,
Thou bringest to poor sinners grace ;
The fallen penitent to lift,
The soul's defilement to efface ;
Great gifts Thy charity imparts,
To change their need to rich estate—
Transformed by Thy sweet grace, their hearts
Thy beauty makes inebriate.

How gentle, Mary, is thy gaze !
It thrills me with strange happiness,
My soul expands beneath the rays
Of thy surpassing tenderness.
O now, if I might but embrace
The Infant Jesus in my arms,
He would not turn away His face,
Nor cause again those dread alarms !

O ecstasy ! O sweet surprise !
His little hands stretch out for me ;
“ I love thee ! ” say those infant eyes—
And I—I burn with charity !
O soul of mine ! weak foolish thing !—
A bride of Jesus Christ thou art !
Receive thy Love's betrothal ring,
And rest thee on His Sacred Heart !

XIII

BENEDICTION AT NOTRE DAME DES VICTOIRES

Ave verum Corpus natum de Maria Virgine.

ALL hail, thou Image pure and sweet !
With gentle smile a Mother shows
Her Child-God to the crowds who meet
To share the blessing He bestows ;
O Mother, I implore thee,
O Child on Thee I call,
Yes, Little One, adore Thee,
My King, my Living God, my All !

O faultless sculpture ! fairest sign
Of sacred mysteries beneath !
That life-like loveliness of thine
Seems from the Everlasting's breath !
O Mother, I implore thee,
O Child, on Thee I call,
Yes, Little One, adore Thee,
My King, my Living God, my All !

Thy silence has a thousand ways
To captivate thy votaries,
To blame their faults, to whisper praise—
To call forth tears, to stay their sighs—

O Mother, I implore thee,
O Child, on Thee I call,
Yes, Little One, adore Thee,
My King, my Living God, my All !

O youthful acolytes ! prepare
The torches, incense, thurible,—
O priests of God, intone the prayer,
And lead the joyous canticle.
O Mother, I implore thee,
O Child, on Thee I call,
Yes, Little One, adore Thee,
My King, my Living God, my All !

O heaven's angels ! Ye of earth !
Make every heart with fervour burn—
The shadow hath a priceless worth—
But see the Substance in its turn !
O Mother, I implore thee,
O Child, on Thee I call,
Yes, Little One, adore Thee,
My King, my Living God, my All !

O priest ! her Child is in thy hands,
Where thou art, Mary seems to come—
In glory's light the Mother stands,
And shows the Fruit of her chaste womb.
O Mother, I implore thee,
O Child, on Thee I call,
Yes, Little One, adore Thee,
My King, my Living God, my All !

XIV

THEY HAVE NO WINE

Thou hast kept the good wine until now. JOHN ii. 10.

How happy, at the nuptials of the Lamb,
How happy Mary is ! for she is Bride,
And Jesus Bridegroom, light, feast, cup of balm,
All—to the Loved One at his side.

He is her Son, her Father, aye her Love—
And, while she leans her dear head on His breast,
She bids the angels of her court above
Heed well the wishes of each guest.

O Mary ! look on us from heaven's height,
Far, far away in this life's banishment !
Assigned the lowest place, scarce in His sight—
Can souls be happy and content ?

We are athirst—and round us, scoffers drain
Their sinful cup, with impious discourse !
Weak fools ! the mirth is false, the pleasure vain,
Its dregs are anguish and remorse.

We are athirst and heart-sick,—Ah ! we need
That Wine which doth repair life's daily loss,
And in the ways of heaven doth make man speed,
Strong with the folly of the Cross.

O plead our cause with that most tender Heart,
With Him who oft was footsore on this earth ;
Poor souls that droop—poor bleeding hearts that smart
Must surely need some heavenly mirth.

O Mary's angels ! ye, the Bridegroom's friends !
Fulfil her word, prepare to do His will !
The bitter water to the brim ascends—
The cup of life our sorrows fill.

Dear Lord ! great God ! her eyes look into Thine—
Thou knowest the wish of her who gave Thee birth ;
Ah ! Thou dost change to Heaven's delicious wine,
For Mary's sake, the tears of earth !

XV

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Wisdom hath mingled her wine, and set forth her table : she hath sent her maids to invite to the tower, and to the walls of the city. Whomsoever is a little one let him come to me. Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine I have mingled for you. PROV. ix. 1.

O HEAVENLY Virgin ! the God of thy fathers—
The God who, to save us, lay hid in thy womb—
Is here, and around Him mysteriously gathers
The folds of Faith's veil, in His dear altar-home ;
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine ;
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

'Tis He whose sweet visit and unspoken blessing
Awoke the Fore-runner to leap in strange glee—
Awoke him to hear thee so meekly confessing
The marvels which God had accomplished in thee.
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine,
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

'Tis He, the same Jesus, who, laid in the manger,
Made welcome the shepherds, the Magi and all—
His state is more lowly, His raiment is stranger,
But we find Him with thee, as at Bethlehem's stall.
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine ;
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

'Tis He, who clung to thee, so gently caressing
Thy neck—and what blandishments lay in those arms!—
Whom thou to thy bosom wert constantly pressing,
With mother's bold love and with creature's alarms.
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine ;
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

'Tis He, who beneath Sacramental appearance,
Re-entered thy heart, as its heavenly Food—
God breaks His own laws by divine interference,
To nourish our souls with His Body and Blood.
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine,
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

O pure Grain of Wheat, bruised on Calvary's mountain,
O Bread made with fires of God's burning love !
O Blood of the wine-press ! The Saviour's Fountain—
What transports of praise can our thankfulness prove ?
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine ;
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

'Tis He, the dear God, whose ineffable brightness
Surrounds thee, transfigured, and clothed with the Sun—
Who delights in the Heart of immaculate whiteness
Which serves Him for altar, for incense, and throne.
Queen of Angels, hearken to me,
Lend me that pure heart of thine,
Let me worship with thee, through thee,
Jesus hidden in this shrine !

XVI

THE SEVEN DOLOURS

*And thine own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts
thoughts may be revealed.* LUKE ii. 35.

I

WHEN Jesus on the altar of the Lord
The willing victim of mankind was laid,
Thy heart was pierced, O Mother, with the sword,
 Seeing the future then displayed—
It bled to see a countless, helpless host
Of children through inhuman monsters lost,
Children whom Jesus had from Satan wrung
 With tears, with Blood on Calvary ;
I see thee mourn the ruin of the young—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee !

II

The King of kings, who clothes the stars with light,
Enjoys no peace, not even in a cave ;
His parents flee, and at the dead of night
 In foreign land the Child they save.
What has He done, that earth should prove unkind,
And that His beauteous Feet should only find
A desert pathway, thick with briar and thorn—
 A waste of dread sterility ?
I see thee mourn this world of wicked scorn—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee !

III

At least the Temple will its Lord receive,
And offer incense, love, and gratitude—
The Priests and Ancients will His words believe,
Nor prove contemptuous and rude—
How comes it, then, that thou didst never feel
Such fear and anguish o'er thy spirit steal,
As when, to teach the doctors, He abode
In Salem three days secretly?
I see thee mourn the ministers of God—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee!

IV

If Jesus comes in manhood's fairest strength,
And shows us all His wealth of tenderness,
Shall we accept our humble King at length?
His heavenly wisdom shall we bless?
No—even thus He found but cruel hate—
Thou hast beheld thine Abel's mangled state,
When dragged to death by crowds with blows and jeers,
The sport of their ferocity—
I see thee mourn our manhood's primeest years—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee!

V

And when the Lord upon the tree of shame
Atones for all mankind, and makes us free—
When thou dost offer souls His love and name
In marriage upon Calvary—
From Him, our bleeding Spouse, how oft we hide
And make the Wound yet larger in His side!

To sin enticed away by Satan's arts,
The penance of the Cross we flee—
I see thee mourn our hardened guilty hearts—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee !

VI

Our Jesus to the gloomy gates of death
Pursues the wretched sinner still astray :
To save him, even at the latest breath,
With arms of love He bars the way.
O, Mother come with Jesus when we die,
With Him receive our contrite heart's last sigh !
The ocean of His goodness from His eyes
Will hide our sins, and set us free—
I see thee mourn our death-bed agonies—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee !

VII

Is there perpetual peace beyond the tomb ?
In spite of Jesus, and His Heart, His pains,
His tears, His Precious Blood—alas ! the doom
Reveals in us some lingering stains ;
The fire that waits us—slow, but not for aye,
Fearful but kind, must burn those stains away—
God's hallowed remedy—Yet, Mother ! come,
Appease His just severity—
I see thee mourning o'er the Prison-home—
O Queen of Sorrows, let me weep with thee !

XVII

WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON !

When Jesus therefore had seen His mother and the disciple standing whom He loved, He saith unto His mother: Woman, behold thy son. After that He saith to His disciple: Behold thy mother. JOHN xix. 26.

I LIVE, and now not I, but Jesus lives in me ;
O, Mother of my Lord ! I too become thy son !
In heaven the glorious King reveres and honours thee,
On earth—this poorest one !

Yes, Jesus on the Cross proclaimed aloud His choice,
He left thee to us all, before His bitter death—
Declared thee mankind's Mother with uplifted voice,
With last expiring breath.

For, miracle of love or miracle of might,
He speaks, and it is done—by Him all things are made ;
He willed there should be light—and lo ! there was the
light—
The Maker is obeyed.

"Woman, behold thy son !" this gentle Jesus said,
"Behold thy Mother," next addressed to us was heard ;
'Twas done—as into Flesh His sole word changes bread—
He needs but speak the word.

Yes, Thou hast said it, Lord ! but was it said for me ?
Am I a Jesus, then ? alas, my dearest Lord,
Can I resemble Thee, who know myself to be
 So guilty, so abhorr'd ?

Am I a Jesus ? I !—a Jesus without prayer,
Without a heart to love, without zeal, energy,
A sanctuary profaned, a mournful ruin, where
 Lurks nameless misery !

One look of Him I have—alas ! that woeful look,
When, loaded with our shame, the Lord came forth to die,
When, buffeted and scourged, the Man of Sorrows took
 The road to Calvary !

But 'tis no longer I ! and never shall be so—
My Jesus succours me, and Mary aids my strife—
Their love supreme shall be the only rule I know,
 Their love shall be my life !

Mother, was not thy Heart our Saviour's last bequest ?
A nobler, worthier gift He had not to bestow—
And nobly hast thou loved, fulfilling His behest,
 The children of thy woe !

I take the precious gift—the sinner, whom Saint John
Did sadly represent upon that day of grace—
Thy Heart adopted him who took thee to his own—
 O give me there a place !

Thou saidst unto him, "Come, thou Firstborn of my grief,
To the Last Supper Room—conduct thy Mother there—
My other Jesus ! come, the soul has no relief
 For woe like ours but prayer."

"Come, Son and Priest, from whom I daily shall receive,
Throughout the rest of life, my sweetest Living Bread—
Thy first sad task must be to watch with me and grieve
For that same Jesus dead."

Thou, Mother, would'st all hearts in thy one Heart could be
To welcome that dear Lord, the Manna from above—
That all might be one throne, one heaven of purity,
One canticle of love.

O Mother, do not pause, perform the blest desire,
Make body, soul and heart completely, only thine !
What in us is not Christ—O burn it, Sacred Fire !
Consume it, Love Divine !

XVIII

THE BRIDE OF THE HOLY GHOST

The fountain of gardens ; the well of living waters, which run with a strong stream from Libanus. CANTICLES iv. 15.

DEIGN to turn thy kind eyes on this desert of woe,
Fair Bride of the Holy Spirit !
His grace, as He bids thee, like manna bestow—
Thy children that grace inherit.

Come, thou virginal Spouse of the Spirit of Love,
Come, Mother of Christ our Brother—
To the poor and the orphan descend from above—
O come like the dew, sweet Mother !

We will build thee a shrine in our innermost heart,
Now clouded with secret sadness—
Thou wilt come—for to sorrow no stranger thou art—
O bring to us holy gladness.

With thee, labour is lighter and varied with rest,
And noon has its shadows grateful—
Down in earth's dark recesses, where thou art a guest
Thy light makes the gloom less hateful.

If it were not for thee, who could quiet the fears
Of the rescued from ways of folly?
But for thee, is there one who could dry all their tears,
Or solace their melancholy?

Where thou comest, nor evil nor sorrow is seen—
Our winter and frost are over—
Soon the barren and desolate land becomes green—
Choice flowers our gardens cover.

All the wealth of thy Spouse is entrusted to thee—
At thy knee we poor children gather—
For the future, at least, let us innocent be
In the face of our Heavenly Father!

XIX

BLESSEDNESS

Yea rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.
LUKE xi. 28.

SHALL I call blest the day that welcomed Mary's birth,
The womb that bore th' Immaculate—
The air she breathed, the milk that nourished her, the hearth—
Before she came, so desolate ?

Shall I call blest the beams that flushed Aurora's face,
When first she kissed this fairest Child—
Cison, and Endor's plain—whose flowers, they say, still trace
The footsteps of the Undefined ?

Shall I call blest God's House, wherein the Maiden spent
The lowly life which was her choice—
Its courts and turtle doves, its echoes faintly blent
With the soft music of her voice ?

Shall I call blest the tomb, the hallowed tomb that kept
God's fairest flower, when life was o'er,
For those three days wherein the Maiden Mother slept—
Then gave her back for evermore ?

I will call blest the soul that sleeps in calm repose
Beneath her mantle, breathing love
More pleasing to Our Lady than the fairest rose
Found in the heavenly land above.

XX

WHERE MUST WE SEEK OUR MOTHER?

Wisdom is easily seen by them that love her and is found by them that seek her. She preventeth them that covet her, so that she first sheweth herself unto them. WISDOM vi. 13.

WHERE must we seek our Mother blest?
Which echo question with her name?
May only angels reach her rest,
As when of yore Saint Gabriel came?
Must earth be left on pinion bold,
To pacify our sense of loss?
Or is her place of dwelling told
To none but desert saint grown old
In service of the Cross?

The saints invoke this Heavenly Queen
In storms, and when calm comes again,
In city square, on village green—
In every joy and every pain.
Yes, he who loves her everywhere
Believes and feels that she is nigh,
That on hell's brink none need despair,
For she can rescue with her prayer
The sinner ere he die.

Her life throughout the unseen world
 Has stretched, and broadened like the sea—
 On Lucifer from heaven hurl'd
 Her footprint shows triumphantly.
 But Mary ! on the prayerful heart,
 Which glows with fires of holy love,
 Bright shines the grace thou dost impart,
 And teaches, Mother, where thou art—
 God's gifts thy presence prove.

And therefore to some well-known shrine
 I journey when I seek for thee,
 Where murmured Aves mix with mine,
 And hidden saints tell beads with me—
 At these dear shrines proud scorners jest ;
 But how I love to find them spread
 Throughout the world, from east to west,
 Where'er the land with Faith is blest,
 And God is honourèd !

All hail, sweet refuges, all hail !
 Fair gardens of virginity !
 Calm havens ! whence our souls make sail
 To reach the Land beyond the Sea.
 Hail, woodland chapels of our Queen !
 Where holiness pervades the air—
 Love thanks you for your friendly screen,
 For love delights to breathe unseen
 The prayer which brings her there !

Our souls will bid farewell to Faith,
Our guide, great Queen, in seeking thee—
The day we are set free by death—
The day when "face to face" we see!
Then, 'mid the countless company
 Attendant at thy starry throne,
Our blissful lot shall ever be
To join the angels' harmony,
 And bless thee with thy Son.

XXI

VIRGO PRUDENTISSIMA

*Prudentes virgines, aptate vestras lampades ; ecce sponsus venit, exite
obviam ei. ANT. COM. VIRG.*

'Tis late, 'tis late—on earth night's sable pall
Hath fallen, colder than the dew,
To hide hearts colder still—and through
The hours I wait, and listen for the call :
Rise, virgins, quickly rise !
The King ye serve draws near !
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise !

O, welcome cry—by heavenly heralds made !
Ring out above the tempest's moan !
I wait here wearily alone—
My summons to depart is long delayed !
Rise, virgins, quickly rise !
The King ye serve draws near !
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise !

Yet is my soul prepared to meet her Lord?
Has she the virgin's bridal light?
Has she the garment pure and white?
Ah! who can tell? and hark! I hear the word!
Rise, virgins, quickly rise!
The King ye serve draws near!
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise!

Most wise of virgins! Lily among thorns!
Are any wise except for thee?
The prudence of thy charity
Each righteous soul in that last hour adorns.
Rise, virgins, quickly rise!
The King ye serve draws near!
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise!

My lamp burns low—oh, give me of thine oil!
Give! for the time doth still suffice—
Give, without money, without price,
The wedding garment washed from every soil.
Rise, virgins, quickly rise!
The King ye serve draws near!
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise!

O bless thee! Oil most fragrant and most pure
Thy thoughtful, tender love bestows!
The lamp is trimmed, and brightly glows—
Its shining makes the midnight road secure.
Rise, virgins, quickly rise!
The King ye serve draws near!
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise!

O Virgin Mother ! sinner as I am,
Beneath thy mantle let me hide,
Until my soul is beautified,
And covered with the white wool of the Lamb !
Rise, virgins, quickly rise !
The King ye serve is near—
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise !

Most Prudent Virgin ! what, alas ! have I
To offer thee ? What pearl to give ?—
For thy sake, ever, while I live,
On this dark earth I'll spread the midnight cry,
Rise, virgins, quickly rise !
The King ye serve is near—
The God ye love is here—
Make haste, be wise, be wise !

XXII

THE PROCESSION OF VIRGINS

After her shall virgins be brought to the king, her neighbours shall be brought to thee. They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing, they shall be brought into the temple of the king. PSALM xliv. 15.

HARK ! David sings in deathless strain
The glad lot that befalls us ;
Our Queen leads on her virgin train—
To Sion's Temple calls us.
Happy bridesmaids, prepare !
To the nuptials repair !
Sing in echo's charmed ear :
We are here ! we are here !

How beautiful, how fair our Queen !
Our King, how sweet and tender !
The gentle virtues in her seen
Delight the King of splendour.
And our souls in her track
Tarry not, nor look back,
Leaving all earth holds dear ;
We are here ! we are here !

They are not tuneful seraphim,
But virgins who are singing:
Their canticle, their Bridal Hymn
Through all the sky is ringing.
Ah ! more fragrant and sweet
Than the rose 'neath her feet,
Heaven's Queen draweth near ;
We are here ! we are here !

Alas, can our poor voices be
With virgin voice united—
With those whose love triumphantly
Unto the Lamb is plighted !
O Divine Lamb of God !
Cleanse our souls with Thy Blood !
And we'll sing without fear :
We are here ! we are here !

XXIII

HYMN OF LOVE

Love is strong as death. CANTICLES viii. 7.

LOVE, ever love, as God ordains,
Yes, love the things that are above—
The love whose bitterness remains
Shall not receive the name of love.
Go, seek the land where Mary reigns,
Fly thither, hearts, on wing of dove—
Love, then, with love that never dies,
With love the Sacred Heart will bless,
And so be wise
In happiness.

Love, ever love her ! God bestowed
Upon His well-belovèd Son
That Mother—Ah, what love He showed !
How tenderly He placed the crown
Upon her brow, in heaven's abode,
While Paradise in bliss looked on.
Love, then, with love that never dies,
With love the Sacred Heart will bless,
And so be wise
In happiness.

Love, ever love, with love intense !
No seraph's transport can compare
Unto the charity immense
In which our Mother took full share—
Which counted not the vast expense,
But died to free us from despair.
Love, then, with love that never dies,
With love the Sacred Heart will bless,
And so be wise
In happiness.

Love, ever love—'tis her reward !
She asks none else for all she bore—
Ah, think ! she must have found it hard
So long to nurse the sick and sore—
Her own departure to retard,
To be our Mother more and more !
Love, then, with love that never dies,
With love the Sacred Heart will bless,
And so be wise
In happiness.

Love, ever love—it is her right !
Then, after Jesus, give her all—
Her beauty, goodness, shine so bright,
Her charms our pining hearts enthrall.
Great Queen, admit us to thy sight,
We listen for the welcome call !
Love, then, with love that never dies,
With love the Sacred Heart will bless,
And so be wise
In happiness.

Love, ever love ! around one hearth
Love forms but one fraternal ring—
One Mother to us all gave birth
In Christ, our Brother and our King.
Ah, then, let all in heaven, on earth,
One hymn of love to Mary sing !
Love, then, with love that never dies,
With love the Sacred Heart will bless,
And so be wise
In happiness.

XXIV

SHOW THY FACE

Show me thy face, let thy voice sound in my ears: for thy voice is sweet, and thy face comely. CANTICLES ii. 14.

AN eastern radiance crowns her brow,
And lustrous is her dark hair's braid,
A gentle glance her eyes bestow,
And kinder lips have never prayed—
Ah! nobly doth her beauty show
The grace that fills the Mother-maid.
Mother blest! show thy face,
Deign thy veil to remove!
On our hearts let us trace
The dear features we love!

We are impatient to behold
Thy features lit with glory's light—
That heavenly look, wherein is told
Thy history since Christmas night
When, Mother, thou didst dare infold
In sheltering arms the God of might.
Mother blest! show thy face,
Deign thy veil to remove!
On our hearts let us trace
The dear features we love!

O wherefore, wherefore thus conceal
A vision holy and divine?
Receive our suppliant appeal,
And let thy face upon us shine!
What truth, what love would it reveal!
Sweet Mother, to our prayers incline!
Mother blest! show thy face,
Deign thy veil to remove!
On our hearts let us trace
The dear features we love!

We there would worship innocence,
Simplicity and modesty—
There, sweetness, courage, penitence—
There, truest wisdom learn from thee—
For in thy lovely countenance,
Fair Mother, every grace we see!
Mother blest! show thy face,
Deign thy veil to remove!
On our hearts let us trace
The dear features we love!

What happiness the Blessed feel!
Who on that face for ever gaze
They see the likeness, as they kneel
Unto thy Jesus, whom they praise
They see Him shine; "put as a seal
Upon thy heart," to endless days!
Mother blest! show thy face
Deign thy veil to remove!
On our hearts let us trace
The dear features we love!

XXV

REVELATRIX

I am the mother of fair love, and of fear, and of knowledge, and of holy hope. ECCLESIASTICUS xxiv. 24.

Who shall declare the deep abyss of might,
The riches, the magnificence, the height
Of God the Father, whom the heavens bless?
 'Tis thine, the Angels' Queen,
 To tell all thou hast seen,
Thou mirror of supernal loveliness.

Who shall declare His Wisdom's festal call,
The torrent of delights, the banquet hall
Of God the Son, His Word, the Light of Light?
 'Tis thine, Light's undefiled
 True Mother and true Child,
To shed rays of that glory on our night.

Who shall declare the all-consuming fires,
The strong sweet love, the jubilant desires
Of God the Holy Ghost, the Heavenly Dove?
 'Tis thine—to whom He came,
 The Breath, the living Flame,—
To kindle in our souls His fires of love.

Who shall declare how fell celestial Dew
To fertilize this barren world anew—
How God vouchsafed to come from heaven to earth?
 'Tis thine, sweet Mother-maid!
 Fair Flower that ne'er shall fade,
The Spirit's Bride!—to tell us of Christ's Birth.

Who shall declare the secrets of that Heart,
So meek and humble, burning to impart
To all Its boundless wealth of love and grace?
 'Tis thine, Its confidante,
 To know His love, our want,
And lead the poor before His Blessed Face.

Who shall declare the royal recompense,
The sweet repose, the happiness immense
Prepared for those who love and serve their God?
 'Tis thine, who shinest bright,
 Like ivory in God's light
To guide us safely to that Blest Abode!

XXVI

THE VISION OF ST. PHILIP

*I love them that love me: and they that in the morning early shall
watch for me, shall find me. PROVERBS viii. 17.*

HE that desireth aught but Thee,
O Lord, is led by error—
Who loves Thee not falls shamefully,
A ruin and a terror.
Come to me, Mother, in my pain!
Would I could give some token
Of love, and sing thy praise! 'Tis vain—
The harp is mute and broken.
Receive my dying breath,
Madonna mia!
Life, Sweetness, Hope in death,
Maria!

I die. . . . Ah, Mother!—is it thou?
Madonna blest and dearest!
Canst thou be come to see me now?
How gentle thou appearest!
Say, art thou here to take me home,
Or drive away my fever?

If cured by thee, shall I become
More faithful? I fear, never!
Receive my dying breath,
Madonna mia!
Life, Sweetness, Hope in death,
Maria!

Most beautiful in purity!
Most beautiful in splendour!
Most beautiful in all I see!
My Queen, my sweet defender!
Ah! let me press to this poor heart
Thy robe of azure glory,
So let my happy soul depart,
While thou art bending o'er me!
Receive my dying breath,
Madonna mia!
Life, Sweetness, Hope in death,
Maria!

To die . . . to die in thy dear sight—
In sight of thee to waken!
Make haste, make haste my soul, take flight,
This earth must be forsaken!
But no—God's will that leaves me here,
To love I must endeavour,
And live that death may be more dear,
More beautiful than ever!
Receive my dying breath,
Madonna mia!
Life, Sweetness, Hope in death,
Maria!

XXVII

OUR LADY OF THE MIRACULOUS MEDAL

Put me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm.

CANTICLES viii. 6.

UNTO the Father,
 When life was done,
Christ led His Mother,
 Claiming her crown.
Yet she remained not
 In that far light—
Cloud-like she hovers
 Ever in sight.
 Hail Queen of Heaven !
 Dawn of the day !
 Bright Star of Even,
 Lighten our way !

Flinging down fragrance,
 Fragrance of Spring,
Rising like incense,
 Ring over ring,

On the moon's pavement
Shining she stands—
Ocean to greet her
Lifts up his hands.
Hail Queen of Heaven !
Dawn of the day !
Bright Star of Even,
Lighten our way !

Golden in splendour,
Dazzling and rare—
Meek in her greatness,
Gentle and fair.
Heaven such beauty
Never has seen,
Vision of gladness !
Bright and serene.
Hail Queen of Heaven !
Dawn of the day !
Bright Star of Even,
Lighten our way !

From her hands graces
On us are shed,
Rubies that Jesus
Gave when He bled.
Brighter her crown grows
As the Saints come,
Blessing the Blessed
Fruit of her womb.
Hail Queen of Heaven !
Dawn of the day !
Bright Star of Even,
Lighten our way !

Mary ! my soul calls
 On thy dear name ;
 Build there thine altar,
 Kindle thy flame.
 Glow on my bosom,
 God's seal and sign—
 Bright golden treasure,
 Sigil divine !
 Hail Queen of Heaven !
 Dawn of the day !
 Bright Star of Even,
 Lighten our way !

In the night's tempest,
 Be thou my light !
 If the snake strike me,
 Heal thou his bite !
 Thine it is ever
 Satan to crush—
 Thine my heart's tempest,
 Mother, to hush !
 Hail Queen of Heaven !
 Dawn of the day !
 Bright Star of Even,
 Lighten our way !

XXVIII

SPEAK TO MY HEART

*Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the friends hearken : make me hear
thy voice.* CANTICLES viii. 13.

WHEN all the saints and angels meet
To praise God with their voices,
One voice there is supremely sweet
In which His Heart rejoices—
O Mary ! can that voice be heard
By hearts that are sin-laden ?
Speak to my heart one only word—
Speak, gentle Mother-maiden.

'Tis said, that men of holiness
To thy dear speech are bidden—
That many a simple shepherdess
Has talked to thee unhidden—
To one—that hath an ear to hear,
Whose gathering tear-drops glisten—
Speak to my heart, speak, Mother dear !
And let thy poor child listen !

O sweetest voice, O sweetest sound !
What miracles it worketh—
Whether the outward sense is bound,
Or in the soul it lurketh !
Its accents opened heaven's gate,
Made heaven's King our Brother—
Speak to my heart, Immaculate !
O speak to me, my Mother !

The language of the world seems sweet,
Just as its false things glitter ;
With deadly poison 'tis replete,
And gall is not more bitter.
There, pride and jealousy are sown,
There, hatred's worst incentive—
Speak to my heart, speak thou alone,
Thy servant is attentive.

'Tis true thy voice inflicts its wound—
Reproves in accents burning—
But hearts to love are thus attuned—
Are fired with holiest yearning ;
Thy little ones true wisdom learn,—
The old again feel youthful—
Speak to my heart, then, in its turn,
O make it pure and truthful.

Dear echo of the Saviour's voice,
In tone so soft and lowly !
Thy music is my joy, my choice,
Thou sweetness of the Holy !
When "Share the gladness of thy Lord"
At the last hour is spoken,
Speak to my heart the same blest word,
Yet keep my heart unbroken !

XXIX

THE SERVANT OF MARY

*She shall not fear for her house in the cold of snow : for all her domestics
are clothed with double garments. PROV. xxxi. 21.*

SERVANT of thine, O Mary, feels no shame—

Flower-crown'd

And renown'd.

Mother of God, 'tis service but in name—

Serving thee,

I am free !

Virgin most wise

Rule me and teach !

True wisdom lies

In thy sweet speech !

To serve the world is blindest wilfulness—

All is vain,

All is pain ;

But we thy service more and more can bless—

Here we gain,

Here we reign.

Virgin most wise

Rule me and teach !

True wisdom lies

In thy sweet speech !

Thy sacred images I love to kiss,
Till thy light
Greet my sight.
To wear thy livery night and day is bliss ;
For my love
Thus I prove.
Virgin most wise
Rule me and teach !
True wisdom lies
In thy sweet speech !

These holy scapulars I love to kiss,
And to keep
During sleep.
Thy beads, like Philip, I would never miss—
Dearest bands !—
From my hands.
Virgin most wise
Rule me and teach !
True wisdom lies
In thy sweet speech !

O can I ever give thee service due ?
Gifts are shared,
Faults are spared—
'Twere just, instead of crosses light and few,
If I bore
Thousands more.
Virgin most wise
Rule me and teach !
True wisdom lies
In thy sweet speech !

Thy goodness were content, if we but strove
For desire,
And more fire,
A little patience, and exceeding love
With its dart
In the heart.
Virgin most wise
Rule me and teach !
True wisdom lies
In thy sweet speech !

Two precepts bind all souls beneath thy sway—
Holy life,
Love, not strife.
Thy tender smile illumines the happy way
Of the Blest
To their rest !
Virgin most wise
Rule me and teach !
True wisdom lies
In thy sweet speech !

XXX

INTERCEDE

Now therefore pray for us : for thou art a holy woman, and one fearing God. JUDITH viii. 29.

If we wander like sheep, and our souls fall a prey
To the wolf of the desert, that prowls where they feed,—
If at last Jesus leaves them forsaken, astray—
O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

If, a thousand times pardoned, we still dare offend,
And try Divine patience and love, without heed
That the gentle forbearance in vengeance must end—
O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

If our sin-blinded soul cannot find in the gloom
The fountain of Jesus, the Five Wounds that bleed,
And the Fair Tree of Life, the sweet fruit of thy womb—
O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

If, though naked and poor, we will utter no prayer,
Too proud to acknowledge our guilt and our need,
If we fiercely determine to die in despair—
O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

If, deserted and shipwrecked, we drift on life's tide,
While Heaven and Hell on our doom seem agreed—
Heaven's gate shut so fast, and Hell's jaws stretched so
wide—

O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

When the hand of death grasps us with firm, icy hold,
That freezes the heart's blood, the brow's clammy bead,
And even the "Jesus !" on lips dead and cold—

O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

When feeble, worn out, in the dead of the night,
The Bridegroom approaching, O how shall we speed ?
With no wedding garment, no beauty, no light—

O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !

When called to the judgment our soul learns its fate,
And absence from God and from thee is decreed,
Till fitted by fire for Heaven's pure state—

O Mother of Mercy, do thou intercede !



XXXI

VENI CORONABERIS

*Then shall the king say to them that shall be on his right hand :
Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you
from the foundation of the world. MATTHEW xxv. 34.*

DAY of alarm, day of supremest glory,
Of awful majesty and light,
When Christ the Judge shall come to close earth's story,
To show His justice and His might.

With Jesus on the clouds of heaven descending,
O Mary, thou wilt reappear ;
His words to thee will be the thrilling ending
Of those the happy just will hear.

"Come, O My Mother, and My brethren's Mother,
Come to My Father's blessedness—
Already He has blessed thee as no other,
And for My sake again will bless !

"When to the earth I came, an unknown stranger,
Within thy heart was I received ;
And thou didst clothe Me, naked in the manger,
With raiment thine own hands had weaved.

" Thy Child, I hungered in this human nature,
And thou wert all solicitude ;
Thy Maker thirsted, begged from His own creature,
Thy breast, My Mother, gave Me food.

" When as the Man of Sorrow love revealed Me,
When I went forth in Pilate's chains,
Sadly thou followedst, though not to shield Me,
But lovingly to share My pains.

" Come to receive thy living crown of merit—
These Saints thy joy, thy crown shall be—
The bridal present of the Holy Spirit,
His work on earth, His gift to thee." . . .

O Mary, make us thine, lest Christ reject us,
The day His light shall search us through—
So wilt thou shield thy children, so protect us,
Great Queen, beneath thy mantle blue !

The Wheat, which God into His barn shall gather,
Is gleaned upon His Mother's path—
And thus "all generations" with the Father
Shall bless her on the day of wrath !

THE SEVEN DOLOURS

I

THE PROPHECY OF ST. SIMEON

LIFT from the manger the Holy One born of thee—
Joseph hath all things prepared for the road :
Lowliest Mother, men ask, Is the stable free ?
Let the ox feed from the Cradle of God.

Angels sent Shepherds to visit thy hiding-place,
Jacob's star shewed the Three Kings thy retreat ;
Saints pray in Sion, who pine for the Infant's Face,
Hoping to bless Him, and die at His Feet.

Fragments of Hebron's and Bethlehem's melodies,
Wafted to Sion, awaken her heart :
Echoes have stirred holy Simeon's memories,
Waiting the sign that shall let him depart.

No law exists, made for thee and thy Little One,
Bidding thee hide in the shade of the cave ;
Leave thy device of love—full forty days are done,
Pity the world which thy Babe is to save.

See ! Mary listens, she comes with the Light of lights,
Shining so softly, asleep in her arms—
Rays, that erst dazzled the terrified Israelites,
Beam on a bosom that feels no alarms.

Longed for and sought for, He comes to the Temple
gate—
Lord God of hosts ! are His heralds unheard ?
Do not the princes, the high priests and ancients wait,
Open their portals, and worship the Word ?

Only Saint Simeon, led by the Spirit there,
Waits their approach, his long life's crowning grace,
Welcomes and blesses them, utters his parting prayer,
Takes the fair Babe in his trembling embrace.

Lo ! a strange pallor spreads over the prophet's face,
Kissing Christ's Feet, he had thought to find death—
Moved by the Spirit, he speaks in the Holy Place
Stern words of woe with his faltering breath.

“He shall be set as a Sign men shall contradict,
Dooms by this Child shall for ever be sealed—
In thine own soul shall the keen piercing sword inflict
Wounds at which hearts will grieve, thoughts be re-
vealed !”

Mary then offers the young of the turtle dove,
Clasps to her bosom its Treasure again—
Pressing so closely, so deeply the Sword of Love
Into her heart with an exquisite pain. . . .

Mother, too brief was thy morning of happiness,
Long, long the evening whose weepings abide !
Queen of Compassion, oh, comfort the comfortless,
Blest are the mourners who mourn by thy side !

Henceforth let penance be dear to the innocent—
Woe to the wicked, whose life seems so spared !
Whom the Lord loves the Lord visits with chastisement,
Jesus and Mary their mourning have shared.

Sorrow may come, yet, my soul, do not hesitate,
'Tis but the shadow of Him thou dost love—
Safer is sorrow for man in his fallen state—
Bliss without pain must be looked for Above.

II

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

HER well-hidden nest is watched o'er by the bird ;
The hind haunts the thicket where, far from the herd,
Her fawn lies concealed in the sheltering shade,
While she, within call, seeks for food in the glade—
But dearer thy home, gentle Mother ! to thee,
Amid the lone hills of the green Galilee ;
So secret the village, men well might suppose
The valley holds only the lily and rose—

To that home
Neighbours come,
Jubilant with holy pleasure—
They delight
In the sight
Thou dost grant them of thy Treasure.

Sheep wander about on the warm grassy hills,
Lambs bask on the borders of flower-fringed rills,
The vineyards with fig-tree, grey olive and vine,
Offer foliage to shade that sweet Flower of thine—
At hand holy Joseph works on day by day,
And Angels' white wings may be heard on the way—
Profound as the peace in the realms whence they come
Is that which reigns here in the Nazareth home—

Ah, beware,
Mother fair !
Hidden nests are sometimes harried—
And the fawn
By the lawn
From his mother oft is carried.

The huntsman is out in keen search for his prey,
Is tracking thee home ; 'tis unsafe to delay—
Flee, Mother, and hide thy poor Infant awhile—
The sedge and the bulrush still bend o'er the Nile.
The fugitives flit across fields bathed in light,
Down the gorge of the mountains they vanish from sight,
Escaping the vineyards and valley, they gain
Ere morning the lone desert's smooth trackless plain—

Far and wide
On every side
Lies the desert's yellow ocean—
As they go
Cries of woe
Fill their hearts with sad emotion.

Away from the arms of his mother is torn
Each innocent image of Mary's New-born—
The shrieks of the slaughtered, and cries of despair
Are borne to the desert in each breath of air—
Hush ! infants, or Mary's poor heart will soon break,
Her own must be saved, else she would not forsake
The victims of Rama, where Rachael opprest
Bewails the foul murder of babes at the breast—

Children blest !
Be at rest,
Ye have lived to die for Jesus—
In one breath,
Life and death
Give you all we want to ease us.

The Lord of the wilderness passes unknown—
No manna is sent, no omnipotence shown—
The sun beats upon them, the sand-storm sweeps by,
Too often the well, when they reach it, is dry—
Now, Bedouin robbers have God for their guest—
Now, on a lone rock Mary gives Him the breast,
Gazelles and wild antelopes gathered around,
Half-tamed by the sight, and her lullaby's sound—

Ah, the bliss

Of each kiss,

While she tends her Infant feeding !

When He sleeps,

Then she weeps,

Thinking of Him torn and bleeding !

The desert hath dangers, but hath Egypt none ?
Hath Pharaoh forgot that dark death of his son ?
Their guide through the desert will here be their shield,
With him they are safe as in Nazareth's field. . . .
From Egypt at last by the wilderness road
The Exiles return to that peaceful abode,
Where, subject, O Mary ! to Joseph and thee,
Our Hidden God dwells in the green Galilee.

Hearts where sin

Enters in

Are no home for thee, dear Mother !

May we be

Sons to thee

Ever subject, like our Brother !

III

THE THREE DAYS' LOSS

How many a heart must have melted with pity,
To see the white lambs driven through Sion's city,
 Decked out for the blood-shedding knife—
The Temple courts rang with their innocent bleating,
As though the young things were thus meekly entreating
 For one more short summer of life.

Those feasts of the Pasch brought forebodings to Mary;
She worshipped, but ever felt timid and wary,
 Made sad by those poor plaintive cries;
For, year after year, she went faithfully thither,
The true Paschal Lamb, the Divine Victim, with her,
 Her life and the light of her eyes.

Peace came when, at even, the companies started
For home, and though Mary and Joseph were parted,
 The journey was one of sweet joy—
The Child, who from one to the other went straying,
Would comfort His Mother, and check her pourtraying
 The death of her beautiful Boy.

How dreadful that Pasch ! when, the day's journey ended,
Woe blacker than night upon Mary descended—

She saw that her Jesus was gone !

Men know when a sorrow will bear kind words spoken,
And none dared reply to a grief so heart-broken,
For none could say where was her Son.

Gone ! gone from them both ! And the darkness was
falling—

Lost ! lost to them both !—and the silence appalling
Brought back each unanswered lone cry—
The birds in the gloaming were greeting each other,
But the hush of the night found this desolate Mother
Awaiting her lost One's reply !

“ Oh, what have I done, that my Child should thus leave
me ?

Return, O my Jesus ! In what did we grieve Thee ?

Ah, could there be fault or defect ?

We brought Thee safe home from the land of the stranger ;
And now we have lost Thee, and left Thee in danger,
Where none Thy young life will protect ! ”

Less welcome was light when it dawned on creation,
Than the day-break that came on her dark desolation,
And timidly crept up the sky—

At the first ray, with Joseph the poor Mother started—
They sped with the swiftness of love broken-hearted
And scanned each fresh group that drew nigh.

They asked, though she feared that her question was
bootless,

They searched, though she felt that the search would be
fruitless,

They traversed the streets and the squares—
The city was calm, so He had not been taken—
Her Child was uninjured, yet—she was forsaken,
And God had not answered her prayers.

But listen ! the daughters of Sion are speaking ;

“ Oh, whom is the fairest of women thus seeking ?

’Tis Jesus of Nazereth she seeks—

The Child whose sweet aspect attracts all beholders,

With golden hair clustering over His shoulders,

Like roses His beautiful cheeks.

“ O fear not, sweet Lady ! what harm can befall Him ?

We will seek Him with thee, we will cease not to call Him—

He soon will come back to thy arms ! ”

The day waned away, and the Child was still straying—

The night came again—alas ! where was He staying ?—

Another long night of alarms !

Worse, worse than the pang of Saint Simeon’s prediction,
Most fearfully like the foretold Crucifixion—

Three days she confronted the Cross—

Who knows how she lived through those nights of affliction,

Ordained to foreshadow her dread dereliction

When parted by Death, not by Loss ?

Ah ! this is a sorrow as vast as the ocean—
Her woe is revealed in her words of emotion,
Her language of gentle complaint.
And yet her sad question seems almost unheeded—
The work of His Father by Jesus is pleaded
In terms of mysterious constraint.

O souls ! without Jesus, and yet without sorrow,
Who put off so coldly your search till the morrow,
Perchance till the day of your death—
Who dwell in your darkness, yet see the truth shining,
Who harden your hearts which God's grace is inclining,
Nor hearken to what His voice saith—

Your life without Jesus is wasted and aimless—
His Mother, who lost Him, yet losing was blameless,
Now calls you from sin and from sleep.
O Mary ! who sorrowing sought Him and found Him,
Lead all unto Christ, where His Flock lies around Him,
The Shepherd who sought the lost sheep.

IV

MEETING JESUS WITH THE CROSS

O YE, who dwell in this great toiling town,
 Ye think your lot unknown !
 Your labour borne alone !
Through din of day, and through the gloomy night,
 And whether fall or fight,
 Your life is kept in sight—
Turn, only turn ! One walks ye then must meet—
 He follows in the street—
 With Wounds in Hands and Feet !

Ye busy slaves ! ye Mammon-serving men
 Of haste and silence—when
 Ye pass Him, look again !
And ye, who stand irresolute outside
 Where Shame and Sin abide—
 He passes—do not hide !
Ye homeless ones—unnamed, long gone astray—
 He comes, shrink not away—
 He comes, fear not to pray !

Ye poor ! He sees you banished 'mid your wants,
With cruel unjust taunts,
To Famine's fever haunts !
Ye little ones ! run to Him if ye will !
Ah ! treat no children ill ;
He watches children still.
All ye who bear grief's aching weary loads
Along the city's roads,
Are watched to your abodes !

By country paths, there used to stand the Cross
'Mid primroses and moss ;
Now England mourns its loss—
From Christ's own Sign the foolish nation fled,
Scarce placing it with dread
Above the sleeping dead—
Yet Faith beholds it still.—In every town,
Though heedless men pass on,
Christ comes with Cross and crown.

For Faith, and only Faith, can well explain
Why sickness, want, and pain
Here hold triumphant reign—
It is as if—e'en they can read that run—
In those whom worldlings shun
The Mother meets her Son—
The scene is here renewed—that mournful day,
The silent brief delay—
The Meeting on the Way.

Slow, slow He crept—at last He drew in sight—
All-dimmed His beauty bright—
Extinguished all His light—
How mournfully from hair and blood He strove

To free His eyes, and prove
Unchanged His tender love !
But He was thrust away, and from her thrown,
No ruth, no pity shown—
He sank with gentle moan.

No pity shown ! before His Mother's eyes—
Regardless of her sighs,
With oaths they made Him rise !
On, ever on ! spurned, beaten, if He flagged,
With lash, or staves all-jagged—
Thus was our Saviour dragged !
Will none have pity on the Mother's woe ?
None share what bends Him low,
And save his God a blow ?

How oft the works of mercy loudly cry
For some slight sympathy,
And we pass coldly by !
Faith warns us, but we turn away our eyes,
While Mary sadly sighs,
And Jesus meekly dies.
And thus we err—reluctant to relieve,
Thus fail we to perceive
The Sacred Hearts we grieve !

Ye rich ! have pity on the toiling town—
O hear that gentle moan !
O see that Falling One !
And promise Mary you will henceforth share
The crosses mortals bear,
As if her sons they were—
And “in the least of these His brethren ” meet
Your Lord in every street,
With Wounds in Hands and Feet !

V

THE CRUCIFIXION

MAKE peace with Him we pierced, and mourn
Before the day of doom—
Appease her whom we made forlorn,
When heaven was hid in gloom—
Ah! grieve we made our Jesus die,
And caused His Mother's misery.

She shares it all, from first to last—
She sees and feels the worst—
She watches nails hold firm and fast
The Child her sweet arms nursed—
The little Hands that clasped her neck
Hang bleeding there, a fearful wreck!

Upon the rugged, stubborn wood
His joints are racked with pain—
She hears the dripping of His Blood,
The nerves rend with the strain—
He thirsts—she cannot cool His tongue—
Think, how the Mother's breast is wrung!

They stripped Him, that she may behold
The Scourged One's beauty marred,
And call to mind the days of old,
The manger deemed so hard—
O wounded Flesh and tortured Head
Find Pilate's Cross a harder bed !

And she, who heard the Angels sing
Around the midnight cave,
Sees Israel crucify their King,
And hears His people rave,
The Gentile soldiers throw the dice,
The Priests deride His sacrifice !

She sees the heavy, thorn-wove crown
The King of kings must wear,
His languid, tortured Head bent down
With pain He scarce can bear,
The brutal jest, the sport uncouth,
That holds the gall unto His Mouth !

She knows the awful, life-long length
Of those three hours to Him,
She feels the failing of His strength,
She knows His eyes grow dim—
And, wounded as with seven swords,
She listens to the Seven Words.

And thus before her, Jesus sips
The chalice He had feared,
Drains every drop with eager lips—
His Father's Will revered
On Calvary is gladly done,
For Mary's love consoles her Son.

He falters when He bids farewell,
He dares not call her Mother—
His dying last words briefly tell
He leaves her to another—
But oh ! the parting looks declare
An endless love that none may share !

Before her, He gives up the ghost—
To her bows down His Head—
The life she gave Him He has lost,
At last her Child is dead—
For her His first and latest breath,
In Bethlehem's birth, in Calvary's death !

We, Mother, shall not be content,
Unless we bear His Cross,
And bravely tread the path He went,
Unless life seems a loss,
And death a gain, our greatest gain—
To die with Christ, with Christ to reign !

VI THE TAKING DOWN FROM THE CROSS

It is finished—it is finished—
Still the Mother lingers there,
One by one the crowds diminished
To their troubled homes repair,
But the faithful Mother stands,
Fastened like His Feet and Hands.

Is it then a brave thanksgiving
Which is struggling from her heart?
Yes—that she is left here living,
Left to bear the ache and smart—
Thanks that He will never know
The anguish of this matchless woe—

Thanks that His sweet life is taken,
That for Him all pain is o'er,
Thanks that she remains forsaken—
Better this, than any more
Of those plaintive moans and sighs,
Of those meek, imploring Eyes !

Thanks, brave thanks, although another
Closes down His gentle eyes,
Death usurping from the Mother
Rights which all poor mothers prize,
Doing those last acts of love,
While she may not stir or move !

Cruel Death ! thus darkly tracing
On His Breast each fearful gash,
Wherefore show those interlacing
Tokens of the scourge and lash ?
Lift at least that tangled Hair,
Dry the crimson Blood-drops there !

Mother, gaze ! thy Child is sleeping ;
See ! in peace He takes His rest ;
Mother, gaze ! it soothes thy weeping,
Calms thy bleeding, aching breast—
To that sad and mournful home
Soon its lifeless Love shall come !

On His Face, His Face—keep gazing
There, whatever may betide ! . . .
But—she sees Longinus raising
Lance to pierce the lifeless Side,
And once more gives thanks that she
Feels for Both the agony. . . .

She may have Him now to bury,
But, it must be quickly done ;
As an outcast, in a hurry,
Unlamented, and alone—
Thus the Lamb who has been slain
Lies within her arms again !

Thanks, still thanks, that all is over,
As she counts the countless tears
In the seamless garb our Lover
On this day of wedding wears,
Woven in her virgin womb
Who must hide it in the tomb !

See, the Queen of Mercy pleading !
 Who hath mercy to bestow ?
 See, the God of Mercy bleeding !
 Who will help to staunch the flow ?
 Shroud Him, He is stripped and dead—
 Bear Him to His rock-hewn bed.

Out upon that cold, bleak mountain
 Gleams the linen winding-sheet,
 Guiding all unto the Fountain
 Where the sad and sinful meet.
 Bathe ye in the sacred Tide
 Of the Saviour's riven Side !

Learn to watch with resignation
 For your dear one's last faint breath !
 Like true Christians, keep your station—
 Love, we know, is strong as death !
 Love must triumph over grief,
 God be thanked for their relief.

Learn from Mary how to smother
 All wild words about your loss ;
 Pity that lone, helpless Mother
 Underneath the empty Cross,
 And believe that she in turn
 Comes to mourn with those who mourn.

Bring, then, linen to Christ's Mother,
 Sympathy from pure, clean hearts !
 And, when summoned to another
 World, that hath no griefs or smarts,
 As "white linen, pure and fine,"
 To adorn her will ye shine !

VII

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

KNEEL down, kneel down—they come, they come—
Jesus is carried to the Tomb ;

His Mother mourns and weeps.
The battle has been fought and won,
The work His Father gave is done—
In peace He rests and sleeps.

Foxes have holes, the birds their nest—
And He too gains a place of rest,
Though but a loan or gift !
A place where He may lay His head—
Into the rock-hewn, borrowed bed
Their Lord the mourners lift.

His Mother gives her last embrace,
Rains tears and kisses on His Face,
In farewell, ere she goes.
The stars lend light, and flowers shed
Scents round the Altar of the Dead,
Dirge-like the night-wind blows.

“ Guard my Beloved—thou happy Tomb,
Chosen like me to be His home—
Would that I too might stay !
Faithfully hide Him from men's hate—
Pity my woe—the Desolate,
Driven so soon away !

“ Father ! once more He will complain !
May not His Mother still remain,
 Sadly to watch and weep ?
Hindered by heartless sentinel—
Jesus ! I may not stay ! Farewell
 Sleep ! wearied Saviour, sleep ! ”

Homeward she makes her mournful way,
Home ? nay, home would have been to stay—
 Treasureless, plundered heart !
The soldiers steal thy Living Bread,
Will not e'en let thee mourn thy Dead,
 Forcing thee to depart. . . .

Waiting the Mother stands the Cross,
Triumphing harshly o'er her loss,
 Greeted by her sad kiss—
Waiting her lies the ransomed earth,
Helpless as infant after birth—
 She has been left for this.

Wanted by us, she stays to give
Motherly cares, and make us live ;
 This is her sacrifice—
Giving up Jesus, taking John,
Creature for God, and thrall for Son—
 Oh ! it is dying twice !

Ah ! must she quit the Sacred Tomb
Seeking her children, must she come
 Into the dark, bleak night ?
Can we not spare her this last pain
Hasten to her, with her remain—
 Win her the mourner's right ?

Sinners ! who caused His Blood to flow,
Sinners ! who caused your Mother's woe,
 See her poor, outstretched hands !
Ready to play this weary part,
Ready to take you to her heart—
 Waiting for you she stands !

Jesus ! by Thee to sin we die,
In mystic death with Thee to lie
 Buried, with Thee to rise—
Mary ! thy sorrows were not vain,
Turn on the children of thy pain,
 Mother ! those gentle eyes.

OUR B. LADY'S COMMUNION ON HOLY THURSDAY

Now the Paschal lamb is eaten,
Every legal rite is done,
And the face of Jesus flushes,
Loving to the end His own—
He prepares the promised Food
Of His Body and His Blood.

In another room His Mother,
Softly weeping, prays apart,
Prays for Judas, guilty traitor,
Prays for John upon His Heart—
Sadly does the Mother sigh,
Knowing that her Son must die.

'Twas for this His Name of Jesus
To her dearest Babe she gave—
Still she keeps the Prophet's warning
In her heart so calm and brave,
Aching with its wound and pain,
Made to bleed yet not complain.

Gabriel is not sent with *Ave*
To console so deep a grief ;
But the loving Heart of Jesus
Leaves her not without relief—
John—the loved one—at a word,
Stands the Deacon of His Lord.

Rise and eat, O Queen of sorrow !
Lest thy strength to-morrow fail—
Thou must share and witness torments
That will make the bravest quail—
Rise ! thy Son, the Royal Priest,
Bids thee to His Mystic Feast.

Once, like dew-drop He descended,
In thee His abode to take,
Now, He comes from lowly altar,
Like the white snow's purest flake ;
Gabriel calmed thy humble fears,
John is sent to stay thy tears.

Jesus seeks the place of safety
Where His Heart first found its rest,
For the whole world turns against Him,
And the lance shall pierce His Breast.
Here at least, ah ! let Him be,
In His own home, safe with thee !

See ! the kneeling Mother gathers
To her heart the Living Bread !
And, the Lamb of God thus given,
John retires with reverent tread—
In her bosom once again
Is the Babe of Bethlehem lain !

Mother ! in thy prayer of rapture,
Breathe a lowly suppliant's name—
Tell Him how my heart is burning,
Half with love and half with shame—
Sighing, longing for its Lord,
Hungering for this Bread adored.

O may I thus shelter Jesus,
Who to me is likewise come !
And should other hearts refuse Him,
May at least this be His home !
Make me more than ever thine,
Mary ! that He may be mine.

INNOCENCE AND PENANCE

ACROSS ~~this~~ wide world's sea
Two consort ships are sailing
I pray you, list to me
Their history unveiling.

The one is snowy white,
And lightly is she laden ;
Her sails are new, and bright
As robe of bridal maiden.

Her sister's sails are red,
With rents in many places,
Which tell of tempests dread,
As seams in sad men's faces.

In company they sail
Through fair and stormy weather ;
They ever keep in hail,
And ride the waves together.

Of faultless symmetry,
They brave fierce winds unshaken
For, from the same good tree
The beams of both are taken.

They sail by day and night,
In each the deck is crowded ;
In one all robes are white,
In black the rest are shrouded.

Across the tranquil sea,
Like distant church bells ringing,
Oft steals a melody
Of unseen angels singing.

And like a message sent,
Where'er these ships pass sailing,
With ocean's music blent
Come sounds of joy and wailing.

At night a lustrous star
Directs their gentle motion,
And silvers from afar
Their smooth track on the ocean.

Towards the west they steer,
And when the sun is going,
If seen, alike appear,
In golden sunset glowing. . . .

Thus Penance, Innocence,
Both make the voyage to Heaven ;
One takes the sinless hence,
Her sister the Forgiven.

With Mary's Joys one rings,
Hence come those sounds of gladness ;
Her Grievs the other sings,
In strains of tender sadness.

R

Their beams the Saviour's Cross,
Their Star most Holy Mary—
They meet no harm, no loss,
And reach God's Sanctuary.

One golden light, one feast,
Await all souls in Heaven,
The greatest and the least—
Unfallen and Forgiven.

LAUS DEO ET MARIE.

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